DESIGNER
Micael Butial
www.behance.net/micaelbutial

[after]

"...the identity is flexible—the arrangements and brand names can be mixed and matched as appropriate."

Caribbean Food Delights and the Royal Caribbean Bakery say they're the number one manufacturer of Caribbean frozen food products, and they've been in business for more than 36 years. The goal here is to design a new identity that represents the company's strength and supremacy. I set out to create branding that could be instantly recognized with a strong presence on their packaging and also on the Web, as well as a flexible mark that could work both in print and online to ensure brand recognition across different media.

The existing branding is old-fashioned, there's too much going on, and the logo is used inconsistently in different media. My solution is to create two different lockups for the logo mark and the brand typography. The first lockup has the logo mark on the left and the brand type on the right, and the second lockup puts the logo mark on top with the type on the bottom. This way, the identity is flexible—the arrangements and brand names can be mixed and matched as appropriate.

I chose to continue using a crown because it communicates royalty and leadership. The company wants to be the leader of manufacturing Caribbean foods. I also chose to incorporate their main product, the patty. The patty also represents a person wearing the crown and seems to be smiling, too.

As for the colors, I decided to keep the same colors that are used in their current logo—red, yellow, and green. I felt that these colors best represented the Caribbean theme. Also, it will be easier for the customers to recognize a new identity if the colors are the same as the ones they're already familiar with.

For the typography, I used a sans-serif font, Refrigerator Deluxe. It's a neutral, easy-to-read font that works well for their packaging and on their website.

about the designer

MICAEL BUTIAL

Micael Butial is a passionate designer who is studying graphic and Web design at The Art Institute of California—San Francisco and will graduate December 2014. He also works as a visual designer intern at Switch Communications in San Francisco.

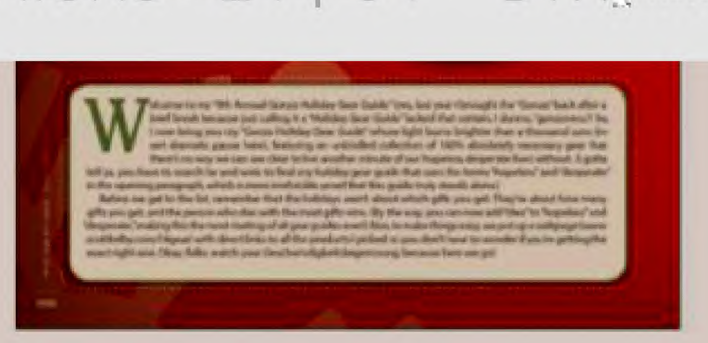
Micael grew up in the Philippines and started painting portraits at a young age. After moving to the United States, he continued painting at a local theme park and then decided to pursue a career in the art industry. Micael's top skills are typography, branding, and illustration. His works have been featured in The Dieline, AIGA Member Portfolios, Serifs & Sans, and in the CSS Design Awards. In early 2014, Micael won an award and scholarship from the Hyatt hotel chain for a design that will be featured on their Canvas Merlot wine. Micael is seeking a career in design in the technology sector and hopes to open his own design firm in the future.

APPLICATION USED: **Adobe Illustrator CC**

FEATURE 56

Scott Kelby's 9th Annual Gonzo Holiday Gear Guide

Scott is back once again with all of the photography gear that he just can't live without. From stocking stuffers to things that make you go "cha-ching," the photographer on your list will be more than happy to receive just one item from this gift guide. If you give more than one gift, he or she is guaranteed to go "gonzo."



…you've been good this year, maybe someone will give you …ething from this list.

… Kelby

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DESIGN MAKEOVER
Royal Treatment

BY DESIGN
Adobe MAX Wrap-Up: A Guide to Adobe's Growing List of Web-Design Programs

PHOTOGRAPHY SECRETS
Happy Holiday Photos

PHOTOSHOP TIPS

FROM THE HELP DESK

DYNAMIC RANGE
Color Control, Exposure, and Creativity

PHOTOSHOP PROVING GROUND
Channel Selections

BEYOND PHOTOSHOP
Smart Circular Panoramas

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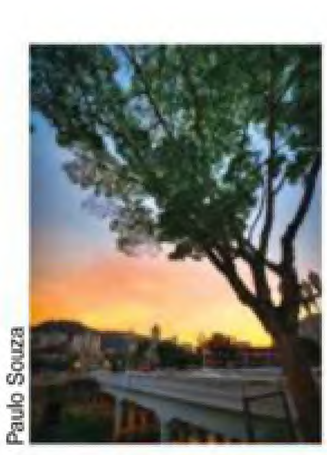
Paulo Souza

Erika Thornes

Nacurfal Selmani

SPECIAL FEATURE

66

Photoshop and Hardware

These days, everyone has a need for speed. After all, the more you can accomplish in a given amount of time, the more you can earn. Your computer equipment is a key piece of that equation. RC talks about everything he takes into consideration when purchasing hardware. From computers and RAM to displays and hard drives, he covers it all.

Rafael "RC" Concepcion

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KEY CONCEPTS

These icons at the beginning of columns indicate there's a short video on a tool or function used in that tutorial at the Key Concepts KelbyOne member webpage at http://kelbyone.com/keyconcepts.

Dodge & Burn tools *Lasso tool* *Layer masks*

Pen tool *Smart objects* *Quick Selection tool*

DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT

Whenever you see this symbol at the end of an article, it means there are either downloadable practice files or additional content for KelbyOne members at http://kelbyone.com/magazine.

All lighting diagrams courtesy of Sylights

From the Editor

going gonzo over the holidays

Yes, folks, it's that time of year again—included in this very issue you now hold in your hands is my 9th annual "Gonzo Holiday Gear Guide" filled with all the same "gonzoness" as last year, but with awesome new stuff. I've included everything from inexpensive stocking stuffers to the perfect gift for the rich doctor or investment banker on your holiday list. The guide starts on page 56 in case you want to get right to the goodies.

In other news, we're always looking for ways to connect with our members and keep you on top of what's going on in the Photoshop universe, so we just launched a brand-new daily blog from The Photoshop Guys (RC Concepcion, Matt Kloskowski, Corey Barker, Pete Collins, and me) along with some special guests who'll be contributing, as well. We'll post fresh Photoshop, Lightroom, and photography stuff daily, so I hope you'll come by and join us in this part of our community. We even made the URL pretty easy: kelbyone.com/blog.

Back here in the mag, we have a lot more to cover besides the Gear Guide. We receive lots of questions about hardware for running Photoshop at its best, so our own RC Concepcion talks about what he takes into consideration when buying computers, RAM, hard drives, and displays to make sure Photoshop runs, and looks, like a dream (p. 66). He's the perfect guy for this because he's a total gear head, and he's always trying to get the most out of his rig.

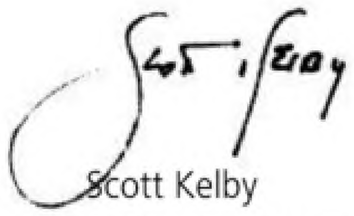
For our Web designers out there, Janine Warner talks about new features in the Web design apps that were recently on display at the Adobe MAX conference, including the new Extract Assets feature in Photoshop (p. 50). In our "Dynamic Range" column (p. 94), Kevin Ames shows us how to take full advantage of our RAW data in Camera Raw not only when it comes to exposure and color, but creativity, as well. In our Lightroom section, Rob Sylvan takes us through the JPEG export options in each module of Lightroom, and shows us how to get the best image quality at the smallest file size (p. 80).

Since it is that time of the year, our own Pete Collins did a piece called "Happy Holiday Photos" where he shows us how to practice taking great holiday photos, along with some awesome camera and lighting tips for making your family look their best (p. 74). If you're a more advanced user, check out our article on "Channel Selections" (p. 100) by Scott Valentine as he takes an in-depth look at selecting luminosity and brightness using channels. These selections can be used to make highly fine-tuned masks for correcting images.

There's lots of cool stuff in this issue, but don't forget—the learning doesn't stop here in the magazine, or with our online classes (did you know we release at least one class every Thursday and sometimes even more?), now that we've added another leg to all of our training options with the new kelbyone.com blog, so we have you covered.

Happy Holidays to everyone from the team here at KelbyOne.

All my best,



Scott Kelby
KelbyOne President & CEO
Editor & Publisher, *Photoshop User*

Introducing the world's smallest and toughest PL mount Super 35 digital film camera!

Now you can shoot Ultra HD TV or 4K feature films virtually anywhere with the Blackmagic Production Camera 4K! You get a large Super 35 size imaging sensor with global shutter, professional PL or EF lens mount, high quality visually lossless Cinema DNG RAW and ProRes recording with the built in SSD recorder, and an easy to use touchscreen for entering metadata, setting camera options, and checking focus. Imagine shooting cinematic, feature film quality video with the world's most portable 4K digital film camera!

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The large Super 35 size sensor gives you 12 stops of dynamic range for beautiful, film like images. The camera's PL or EF compatible mount combined with the sensor's minimal crop factor means you get familiar framing, great depth of field, and beautiful wide angle shots from the lenses you already own! And because the sensor features a global shutter, you'll get perfectly smooth pans and camera moves every time!

Ultra HD 4K

The future of broadcast television and Digital Cinema is 4K! With its massive 3840 x 2160 pixel image, Ultra HD is 4 times the size of 1080HD and matches the resolution of traditional 35mm film. The Blackmagic Production Camera 4K lets you shoot the most amazing high resolution music videos, episodic television programs, commercials, documentaries, and more!

Portable Rugged Design

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size! You get a beautifully crafted design featuring a ma
aluminum chassis, professional broadcast connections,
battery and high resolution LCD display. Now you can shoot native 4K vide
a professional digital film camera that's small enough to hold in your hand

Workflow/Compatibility

The Blackmagic Production Camera 4K includes a built
recorder that saves industry standard ProRes and comp
CinemaDNG RAW files. That means you don't have to
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and edit or color correct your shots in applications like Final Cut Pro X
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Photoshop USER

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JANINE WARNER

calls herself a digital alchemist because creating great websites these days requires a kind of alchemy. She's the author of more than a dozen books about Web design, including every edition of *Dreamweaver for Dummies*, and the creator of DigitalFamily.com.

JAKE WIDMAN

is a writer and editor who lives in San Francisco. He's been covering the intersection of computers and graphic design for about 25 years now—since back when it was called "desktop publishing" and Photoshop was just a piece of scanning software.

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Photoshop User Magazine

Photoshop User magazine is the official publication of KelbyOne. It is for members and is not available to the public by subscription.

As a KelbyOne member, you automatically receive *Photoshop User* delivered right to your door (or digitally) ten times a year. Each issue features in-depth Photoshop, Lightroom, and photography tutorials written by the most talented designers, photographers, and leading authors in the industry.

About KelbyOne

KELBYONE is the world's leading resource for Adobe® Photoshop®, Lightroom®, and photography training, news, and education. Founded in 1998 as the National Association of Photoshop Professionals (NAPP), KelbyOne has evolved from NAPP and KelbyTraining to create a singular hub for creative people to learn, grow, and inspire. From photographers to graphic designers, beginners to professionals, KelbyOne is open to everyone.

There's no faster, easier, and more affordable way to get really good at Photoshop and photography. You can join for only $25 per month or $249 U.S. for a full year of training. To learn more, visit www.kelbyone.com.

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KelbyOne Community

Inspiration, information, and member musings to fuel your creative think tank

BY HEATHER SHORTT

An Amazing Day around the world

I'm pretty sure if we could solve world peace with photography, we would have done just that on October 11, 2014. More than 20,000 photographers in countries all over the world took to the streets to participate in Scott Kelby's 7th Annual Worldwide Photo Walk. Even after our seventh year, the outpouring of camaraderie and creativity still continues to amaze us. With more than 1,000 walks worldwide, we saw group photos all the way from Cairo, Egypt, to San Diego, California, and everywhere in between. The excitement and pure elation from walkers across the globe proved our goal of sharing, inspiring, and igniting creativity was met. (For proof, all the "Artist Spotlight" images on the next two pages were taken by photo walkers.)

While we didn't solve world peace, we certainly made an impact on a small part of the world with our Walking with a Purpose initiative. We're astounded by the amount of donations that rolled in for the Springs of Hope Kenya orphanage. With more than $34,000 in donations, we raised more dollars than we had walkers and tripled our efforts from years past. Plus, with the added $2,500 from our Worldwide Photo Walk T-shirt sales, we achieved exactly what we intended to do and then some. Thanks to all of our photo walkers, there are some very happy children that are getting the help they so dearly need and deserve.

It's hard to believe such a remarkable event has come and gone, but the memories and friends made will definitely last a lifetime. You can learn more and count down the days to the next Photo Walk at Kelbyone.com/photowalk.

We're on pinterest

Did you know that Pinterest.com is one of the newest (and most addicting—don't say we didn't warn you!) social spots to discover and share interests? Because we like to stay on the forefront of all things cool, creative, and fun, we have our very own KelbyOne Pinterest page up and running.

On our Pinterest boards, you can explore everything from pinned articles, tips, and tutorials to inspiring images and behind-the-scenes photos from KelbyOne. Plus, it's the perfect avenue not only for our fans to share images, but also to participate in awesome contests where you can win free Kelby swag. If you haven't followed us already, be sure to check it out at Pinterest.com/KelbyOne.

Photoshop User magazine, live!

Did you know the pages of *Photoshop User* magazine come to life each week in a little show we like to call *Photoshop User TV*? Every Thursday, you can catch a new episode airing over at kelbytv.com, plus view past episodes you may have missed. Watch, learn, and of course, laugh along with Photoshop Guys, Pete Collins and Corey Barker, as they deliver the latest techniques in Photoshop. Every episode is packed with easy-to-follow tutorials that you can apply and put to use in your next project. Be sure to tune in and catch up on new tools and tricks you can add to your creative toolbox.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT › › MIKE BEECHAM (LONDON WALK)
MEMBER SINCE 2013 | TWITTER.COM/MIKEBEECHAM

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Fresh New Classes released at kelbyone.com

Here's a roundup of our latest classes and tutorials that you won't want to miss. Log into your member account at KelbyOne.com or check out these new releases on our app. Not a member? You can try KelbyOne for free. Visit KelbyOne .com/freetrial to view these classes and more.

Cloning and Healing Crash Course
The cloning and healing tools in Photoshop are incredibly powerful and indispensable for retouching images, but sometimes it can be hard to figure out exactly how these tools work their magic. Pete Collins covers the power that Photoshop cloning tools have.

Trailblazers: Powerful Women of Photography the Erika Larsen Interview
Erika Larsen is a contributor to *National Geographic* magazine and her work has been exhibited at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. Mia McCormick sat down with Erika for an in-depth interview about her life and passion for photography and the lengths she goes to "embed" with her subjects.

Making the Switch from Aperture to Lightroom
Matt Kloskowski takes you step by step through the migration process from Aperture to Lightroom, and then introduces you to the most important features and functions in Lightroom that you'll need to know to get started with a new workflow.

How to Shoot Tack Sharp Images
Join Matt Kloskowski as he walks you through all of the factors you need to consider to nail tack-sharp photos every time. Once you have the shot, Matt shows you how to make those sharply focused photos appear even sharper through a number of Lightroom and Photoshop techniques.

Who's Who
in the kelbyone community

In the October issue of *Photoshop User*, we challenged your creative chops by asking you to "Show Us Your Tricks" in a Halloween-inspired Community contest. The entries were ghoulish, spooky, and some, well, downright scary. Out of all of them, our very own effects master, Corey Barker, chose one lucky winner to be featured here. We present to you Sandy Fite and his energetic and ever-so-creative *Yearly Maintenance*. Read on about how self-taught graphic artist Sandy keeps his creative engine running.

What was your inspiration behind *Yearly Maintenance*?

I wanted to avoid the typical pumpkins and such, so my idea was that the creatures had to hit the garage and get some work done before the big night.

Sandy Fite

You mentioned you were self-taught. How has KelbyOne helped in that process?

It wasn't until I joined in 2012 that I got real tutorials from Corey and Pete. Before then I just watched every YouTube video I could get my hands on. When I was offered a full-time position as a graphic artist, I had just three months to get ready. KelbyOne definitely helped me get there.

What's one of the most helpful tips or lessons you've received?

It's hard to pin down, but I was on Photoshop 7 until 2012, so learning the CS platforms and updates was all I focused on. Everything I could soak up, I did. I would have to say overall it was learning adjustment layers. There are some pieces I do that have upward of 40 or 50 of them—great stuff!

In the spirit of the contest, what's your survival strategy for a zombie attack?

Zombies—I am not sure I would want to live in that world, so I probably would be the guy to attack head-on and go down in a blaze of glory. People love heroes!

Any other proud moments in your career as an artist you'd like to brag about?

This one is pretty great. It means more when peers acknowledge you compared to clients. Getting to work on Marvel comic characters for Marvel Universe Live has been pretty cool lately, as well. I would love to work on movie posters, and seeing one go international would be a dream come true.

If you could pick your life's theme song, what would you choose?

I don't really have one, but I imagine an electronic-based rock opera by Rob Zombie would do just fine.

Rock on, Sandy! Keep that creative fire lit, and we'll be sure to stand behind you when zombies attack. Check out more of Sandy's work at sandyfiteprivate.wix.com/sandyfitegraphics.

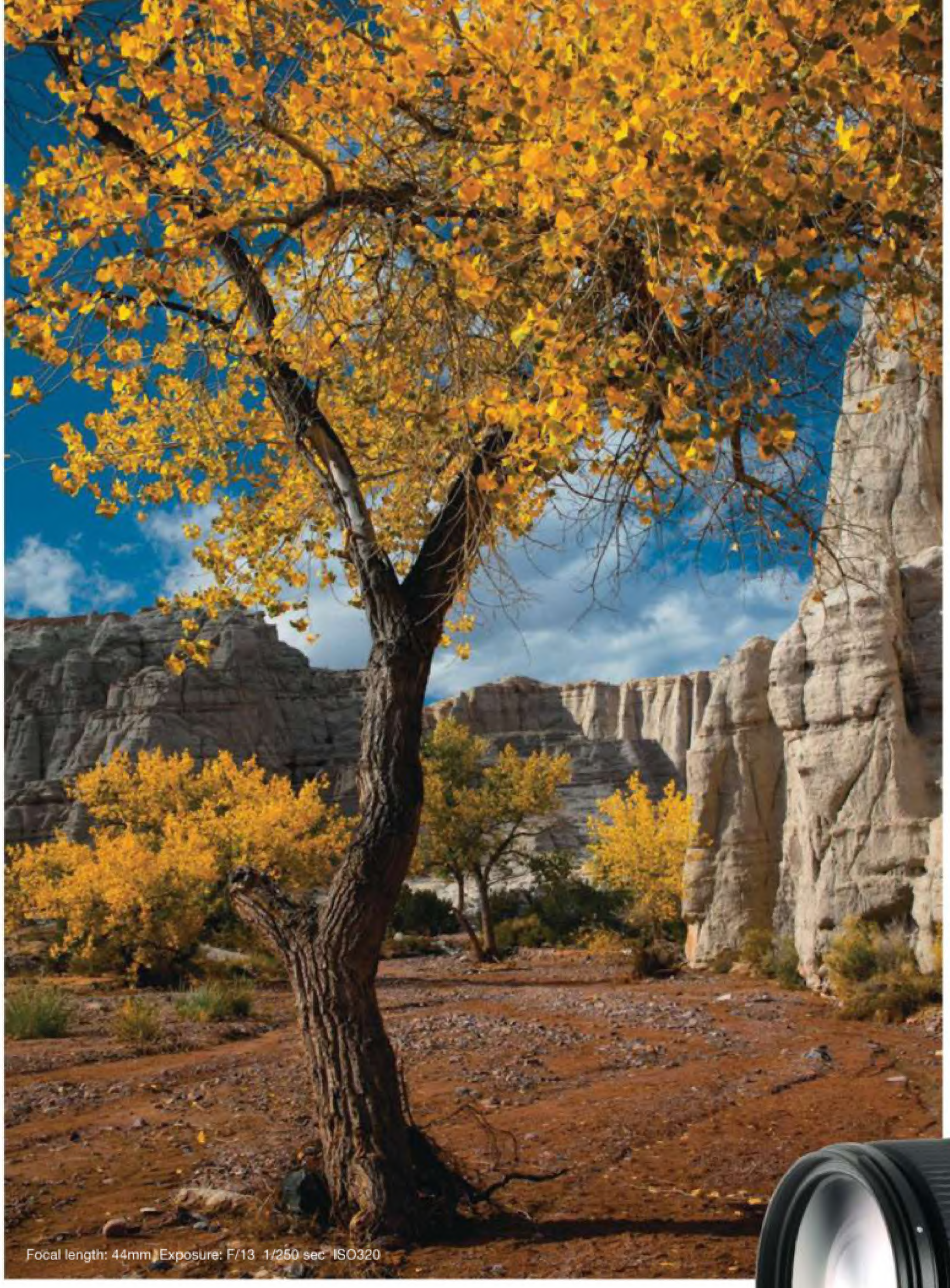
Spread the
good word

Teaching is our passion. It's in everything we do. And hearing your success validates the very reason why we're here. So preach on about the good word. We're all ears.

"Had a load of fun on my first Scott Kelby Worldwide Photo Walk. Great idea and great work by Scott, his gang, and all the group leaders."—Jason M.

"#WWPW2014 From the Athens GA (USA) WWPW, inside of The University of Georgia's historic Sanford Stadium. It was heavy overcast early in the day, and the difference between the rolling skies and the red bleacher seats made a nice contrast."—Christopher B.

"The best thing I did for my photography is to treat myself to Photoshop World. This past September was the first time that I attended. I finally feel like my photos are moving to the next level. If anyone is wondering if it is worth it, it is! Can't wait for next year."—Debbi M. ■



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Exposed: Industry News

The latest news about photography gear, software, and services

BY MIKE MACKENZIE AND CHRIS MAIN

Announcements from adobe max

In an attempt to create a more connected mobile and desktop workflow, many of the announcements at Adobe MAX centered around nine new and updated mobile apps. First up is the Photoshop family of mobile apps. Photoshop Sketch includes new built-in expressive brushes; Photoshop Mix has been updated to extend precise mobile compositing, and now comes in an iPhone version; and the Lightroom Mobile app allows others to select favorites and leave comments on shared photos, and GPS information from iPhone photos now syncs with the desktop version of Lightroom.

In the Illustrator family of mobile apps, Illustrator Draw (formerly Adobe Ideas) offers vector drawing tools in a streamlined interface. Illustrator Line gives users new features for distributing shapes as they draw, as well as access to these vector paths in Illustrator CC.

Adobe also introduced a new category of "capture" mobile apps. With Adobe Brush CC, users can create custom brushes from photographs, which can be used in CC desktop apps. Adobe Shape CC converts anything the camera can see into vector art, which can be shared with Illustrator CC and Adobe Illustrator Line. Adobe Color CC (formerly Adobe Kuler) allows users to capture colors to use with CC apps.

Also new are Creative Cloud Libraries, which allow your colors, text styles, brushes, graphics, etc. to travel with you, as they are available in all your Adobe desktop and mobile apps. These assets will be connected through your new Creative Profile. Adobe also introduced Creative Cloud Market, a collection of content accessible to Creative Cloud members. This content includes thousands of files such as user interfaces, patterns, icons, brushes, and vector shapes. The new Creative Talent Search service connects creatives with job opportunities all around the world. Custom algorithms recommend qualified candidates and the system gets smarter the more a recruiter uses it.

Finally, Adobe announced new features in all of their CC desktop apps. New features in Photoshop include the Creative Cloud Libraries, Extract Assets (see "By Design," page 50), improved guides, new 3D print features, touch support on Windows 8.1 and on the Surface Pro, and Mercury Graphics Engine performance boost. Illustrator includes a new Curvature tool, touch workspace, Join tool, and area-type auto-sizing. For more on all the new features in the CC desktop apps and mobile apps, visit www.adobe.com.

Extensis Releases suitcase fusion 6

In late October, Extensis announced the immediate availability of Suitcase Fusion 6, a professional font manager that allows designers to organize their font collections into a single, searchable location. Suitcase Fusion 6 is capable of handling large font collections and provides designers with the tools to address problems associated with large collections, namely finding, sorting, and using them. Fonts are organized into a single, secure, searchable location where they're automatically checked for corruption and duplicates are excluded. Designers can quickly access thousands of free Google fonts without leaving the application, as well as organize fonts in any way they see fit, enter custom text to view fonts, compare fonts side by side, and more. The Fontspiration panel provides designers with creative inspiration by showing art, typographical specimens, and more without cluttering the workspace.

Suitcase Fusion 6 is optimized for design workflows with Adobe Creative Cloud 2014 applications and provides high-resolution font previews. It autoactivates fonts using plug-ins and panels for applications including Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, and Adobe Illustrator. Users can sync fonts on home and work computers using their Dropbox or Google Drive accounts, making it easy to transfer collections with cloud-based archives and restore.

Suitcase Fusion 6 is compatible with Mac OS X Yosemite and Windows 8. It's available now from Extensis for $119.95 for a new license, or $59.95 to upgrade from previous versions. For more information, visit www.extensis.com.

DxO OpticsPro 10
adds clearview and improved denoising

As we were going to press, DxO Labs announced the immediate availability of DxO OpticsPro 10 image processing software. It's available in Essential and Elite Editions, as well as part of a Photo Suite. New to version 10 Elite is ClearView, a feature that eliminates atmospheric haze and smog in photos. It analyzes the color components of each pixel and improves the contrast locally in one click. Experienced photographers may choose to modify the intensity of the effect and tailor the corrections to individual taste.

Improved for version 10 Elite is DxO's PRIME denoising technology that, according to DxO, now reveals more details with processing up to four times faster. The Noise Reduction palette has a larger area for previewing denoising. PRIME denoising technology analyzes the fine structure of an image to differentiate between noise and fine details. When analyzing individual pixels, surrounding pixels are also studied to identify similarities and combine information, yielding better textures, details, and color saturation.

DxO Smart Lighting, included in both Essential and Elite Editions, is a feature that optimizes the contrast of an entire image and now offers better rendering in version 10. It can be used in automatic mode for simple operation, or in manual mode to access Selective tone sliders for more control.

DxO OpticsPro Essential Edition is available for $129, and the Elite Edition with ClearView and PRIME denoising is available for $199. DxO Essential Photo Suite comes with DxO FilmPack 5 Essential Edition and DxO ViewPoint 2 and costs $189. Finally, DxO Elite Photo Suite includes DxO FilmPack 5 Elite Edition and DxO ViewPoint 2 and goes for $289. For more information about the Essential and Elite Editions, plus the FilmPack 5 and ViewPoint 2 plug-ins, visit www.dxo.com.

HDR Express 3
now available

Unified Color Technologies announced the immediate availability of HDR Express 3, a standalone application or Lightroom plug-in that enables users to create natural-looking HDR images. According to Unified Color, HDR Express features professional HDR technology with a simple interface to produce the best possible image.

New features include a visual file browser with automatic grouping of exposure brackets, as well as new merge, alignment, and deghosting algorithms. Adaptive tone mapping algorithms are improved to match processing to each image, and the new Gamma Control slider allows users to fine-tune midtone brightness. RAW file support has been expanded to include more than 600 cameras.

HDR Express 3 is available now for $79. For more information, visit http://unifiedcolor.com.

Epson Announces
surecolor p600 inkjet printer

The day before PhotoPlus Expo in New York, Epson announced the SureColor P600 13" professional inkjet printer. The P600 combines an advanced MicroPiezo AMC printhead with next-generation Epson UltraChrome HD pigment inks to produce exhibition-quality black-and-white and color prints. Front-in and front-out paper paths enable borderless printing up to 13x19" on glossy, matte, and fine art papers. Improved roll paper support allows photographers to print panoramas more than 10' long.

The P600 uses an eight-color UltraChrome HD ink set and a MicroPiezo print head that produces a maximum resolution of 5670x1440 optimized dpi and variable-size droplets down to two picoliters. Three-level black ink technology uses black, light black, and light light black inks for richer blacks and superior gray balance. It automatically switches between photo and matte black inks to produce the deepest blacks and richest colors, and Save Ink Mode uses less ink when switching. There's an advanced black-and-white photo mode that offers four presets—neutral, warm, cool, and sepia—for neutral or toned black-and-white prints.

The P600 has a 3.5" tilting color LCD and touch panel for easy operation. For added convenience, users may connect via USB, Wireless n, Wi-Fi Direct, or wired Ethernet.

The Epson SureColor P600 will be available in the first quarter of 2015 for $799. For more details, visit www.epson.com.

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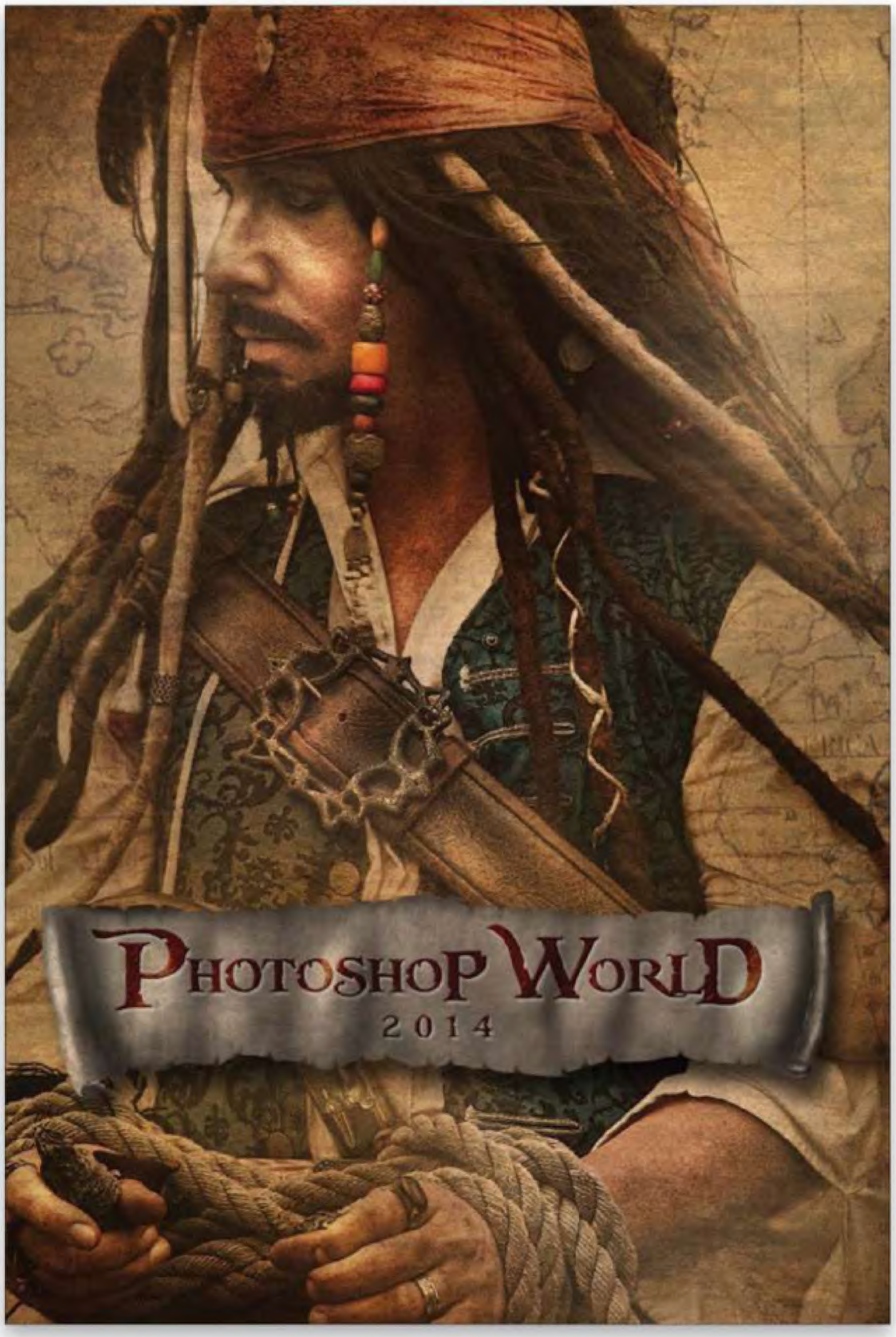


Down & Dirty Tricks

creating a pirate-themed movie poster

BY COREY BARKER

With another year of Photoshop World done, I'm excited to share some of the stuff I came up with for this year's theme, which was *Pirates of the Caribbean*. We filmed the keynote movie on a pirate ship in Tampa Bay with a great Jack Sparrow impersonator. I managed to take a few candid shots of our actor during the filming. Here, we'll generate a cool movie poster effect with this snapshot.

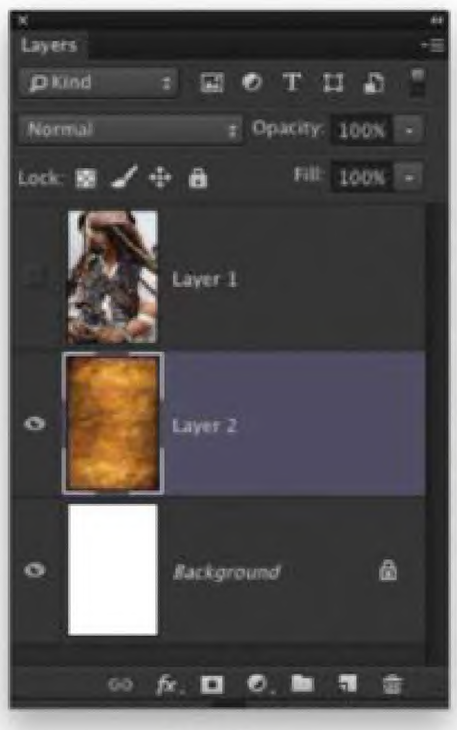
Step One: Start by opening the pirate shot that's part of the download files available for KelbyOne members. Though it's a candid shot, I really like how he's positioned along with his bound hands. This makes it a great candidate for a cool pirate composite.

[*KelbyOne members may download the files used in this tutorial at http://kelbyone.com/magazine/issue/december-2014. All files are for personal use only.*]

Step Two: Create a new document measuring 13.5x20" at 150 ppi in which to build the design. Using the Move tool (V), drag-and-drop the pirate photo over to this new document. Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) for Free Transform so you can scale and position the image to best fit the composition. Hold the Shift key to maintain proportions. You can see we're using nearly the entire image but scaled slightly larger than the new document and offset to the right a bit. Press Enter to commit the transformation.

Step One *Step Two*

Step Three: Now open the background texture file that's also part of the exercise downloads. This will be used for the overall background texture but we're going to do it a little differently. Once you have the file open, bring it over to the main document and scale it to fit in the overall composition. Then, position the texture layer (Layer 2) below the pirate layer (Layer 1) in the Layers panel.



Step Three

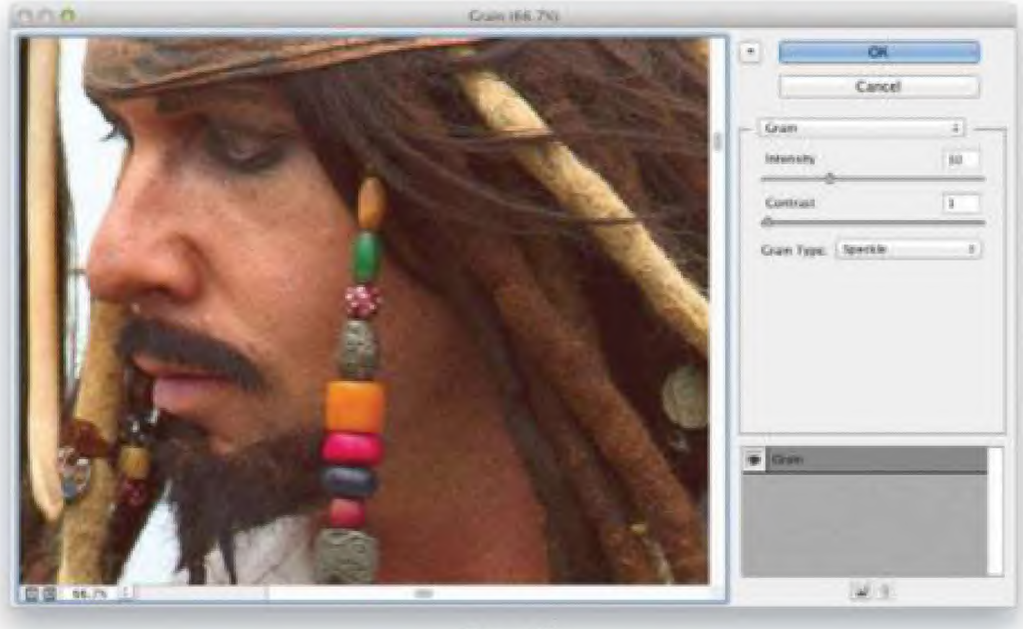
Step Four: Make a duplicate of the texture layer by pressing Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J). Turn off both the duplicate layer and the pirate layer for the moment by clicking their Eye icons in the Layers panel, and activate the original texture layer. Go to Filter>Blur>Average. This will fill the layer with the dominant color in the texture, thus creating a base color layer.

Step Four

Step Five: Activate the duplicate texture layer (Layer 2 copy) and make it visible by clicking where its Eye icon used to be. Drop the layer Opacity to 50% and then press Command-L (PC: Ctrl-L) to open Levels. Grab the middle gray midtone slider under the histogram and push it to the left a bit to slightly lighten the texture. Click OK when done.

Step Five

Step Six: Activate the pirate subject layer and make it visible. Notice that up close the image is rather blurred. Since we're going to stylize this image, here's a cool trick to help sharpen it. Go to Filter>Texture>Grain. Set the Grain Type to Speckle, then set the Intensity to 30 and the Contrast to 1. This will add a stylized grain to the image and slightly sharpen it as a byproduct. Click OK when done. (*Note*: If you don't see Texture in the Filter menu, go to Photoshop [PC: Edit]>Preferences>Plug-Ins and turn on Show All Filter Gallery Groups and Names.)



Step Six

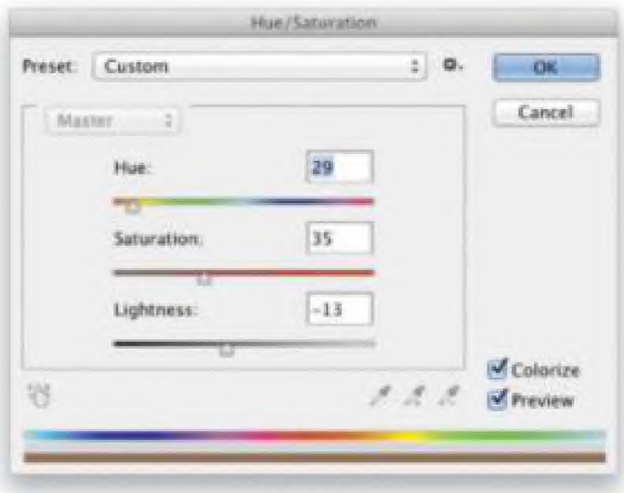
Step Seven: Make a duplicate of this document by going to Image>Duplicate and clicking OK. Go to Layer>Flatten Image to flatten the duplicate image, as this next step will not work on a layered document.

Step Eight: Go to Image>Adjustments>HDR Toning. The settings will vary for different images but start by dropping the Saturation to –100 to remove all color. Jump up to Detail and boost that a little. Drop the Exposure if the Detail setting blows out any highlights. Then, in the Edge Glow section, check on Smooth Edges, and use the Radius and Strength sliders to achieve the grunge effect you want. The settings here work well for this image. Click OK when done.

Step Eight

Step Nine: Once the image is processed with HDR Toning, use the Move tool to drag-and-drop it into the original document. Hold down the Shift key as you drag-and-drop so it will land centered and aligned with the original. If you copy-and-paste the duplicate image, it will be centered automatically.

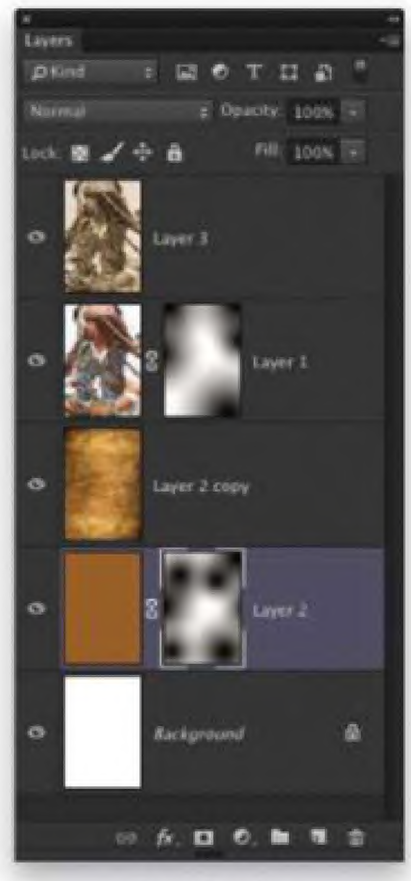
Step Ten: With the HDR Toning layer (Layer 3) still active, press Command-U (PC: Ctrl-U) to open the Hue/Saturation dialog. Check on Colorize and set Hue to around 29, Saturation to 35, and Lightness to around –13. Click OK. This will apply a warm cast over the image. Change the layer blend mode to Multiply and drop the layer Opacity to 75%.



Step Ten

Step Eleven: Activate the original pirate image layer (Layer 1), drop the Opacity to about 90%, and change the layer blend mode to Multiply. Then, go to the bottom of the Layers panel and click the Add Layer Mask icon (circle in a square). Select the Gradient tool (G) in the Toolbox. In the Options Bar, select the Radial Gradient icon, click on the gradient thumbnail to open the Gradient Editor, and choose the Foreground to Transparent preset. Click OK to close the Gradient Editor. This preset will allow for multiple gradients on a single layer mask. Press D then X to set black as the Foreground color, then draw a few random gradients around the edge of the layer.

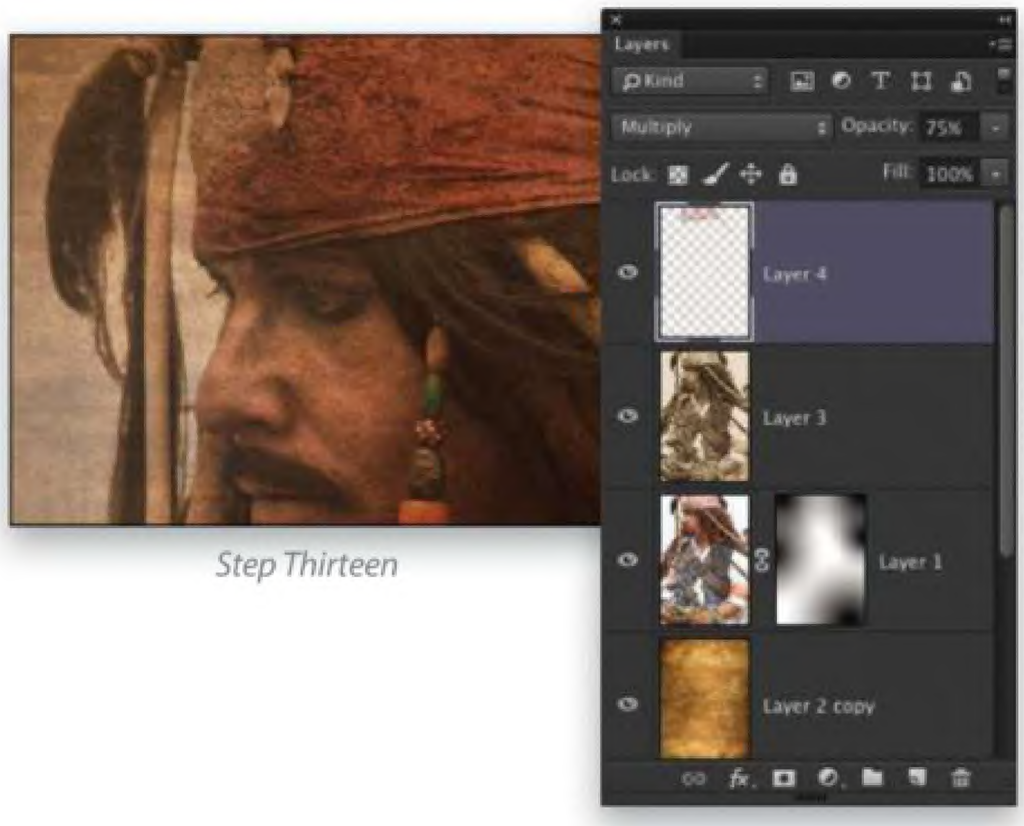
Step Eleven



Step Twelve

Step Twelve: Do the same thing with the color base layer (Layer 2) that we created from the texture. Masking this layer lessens the intensity of the color on the overall image.

Step Thirteen: Now let's enhance the headpiece. Click the Create a New Layer icon to create a new blank layer (Layer 4), drag it to the top of the layer stack in the Layers panel, and set the layer blend mode to Multiply. Select the Brush tool (B) in the Toolbox and choose a round, soft-edged brush. I'm also going to use the pressure sensitivity of my Wacom tablet here by setting the Opacity Jitter in the Transfer section of the Brush panel (Window>Brush) to Pen Pressure. If you don't have a pressure-sensitive pen, then drop the brush Opacity down a little in the Options Bar. Click on the Foreground color swatch, choose a dark-red color, and click OK. Start painting in the red bandana. By introducing color in this way, it not only restores color but it also brings back detail in that area. You can also drop the layer Opacity to lessen the effect. We dropped it to 75%.



Step Thirteen

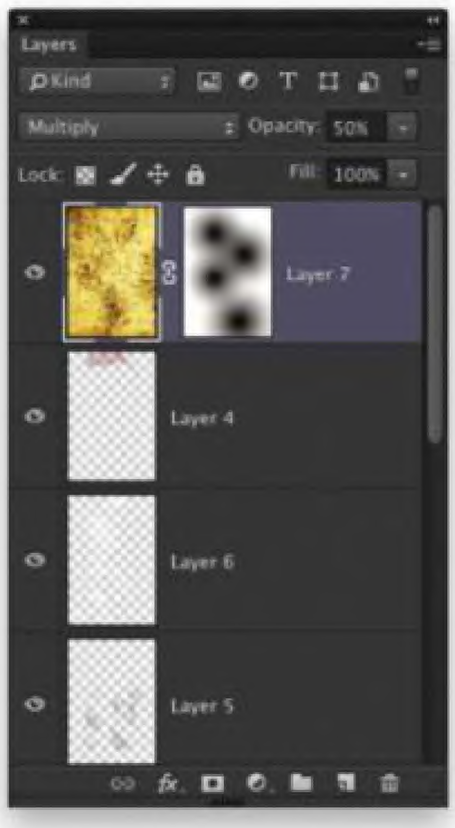
Step Fourteen: Let's enhance color in other areas, like the blue in his vest. Start by creating a new blank layer (Layer 5) below the red bandana layer (Layer 4) and changing the layer blend mode to Overlay. Choose a blue color that's close to the blue of the original, then paint the blue areas with the same brush as before. We dropped the layer Opacity down to 75%, as well.

Step Fourteen

Step Fifteen: Add another blank layer (Layer 6) and set its blend mode to Overlay, as well. This time we're going to paint with white in areas that we want to brighten and enhance, like around the buckle on his chest, some areas of the face and bandana, and even areas around the gun and hands.

Step Fifteen

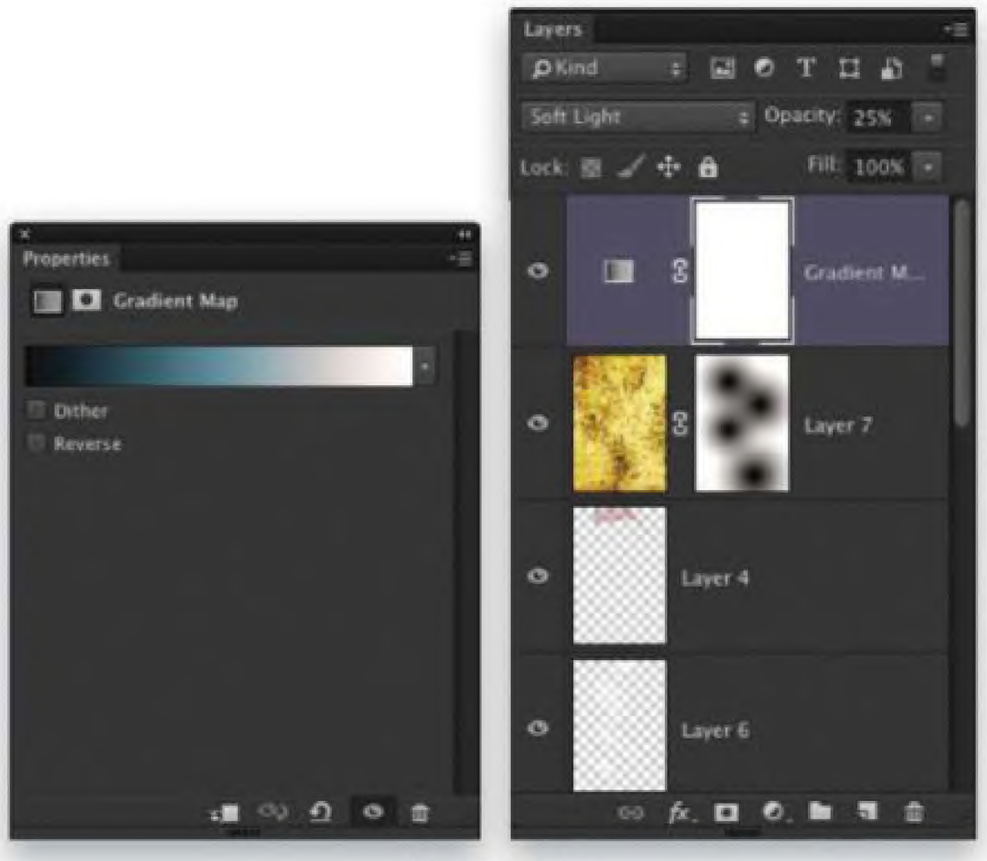
Step Sixteen: Here we have another texture file that's part of the exercise downloads. This is a rather cool map texture that will play right into the overall theme nicely. Open the texture and drag it over to the main file (Layer 7). Use Edit>Free Transform to fill the image with any part of the map. Position the layer at the top of the layer stack, change the layer blend mode to Multiply, and drop the layer Opacity to 50%. Add a layer mask to this layer and, as we did before, draw radial gradients around the layer mask to hide the texture in critical parts like around the face and other detailed areas.



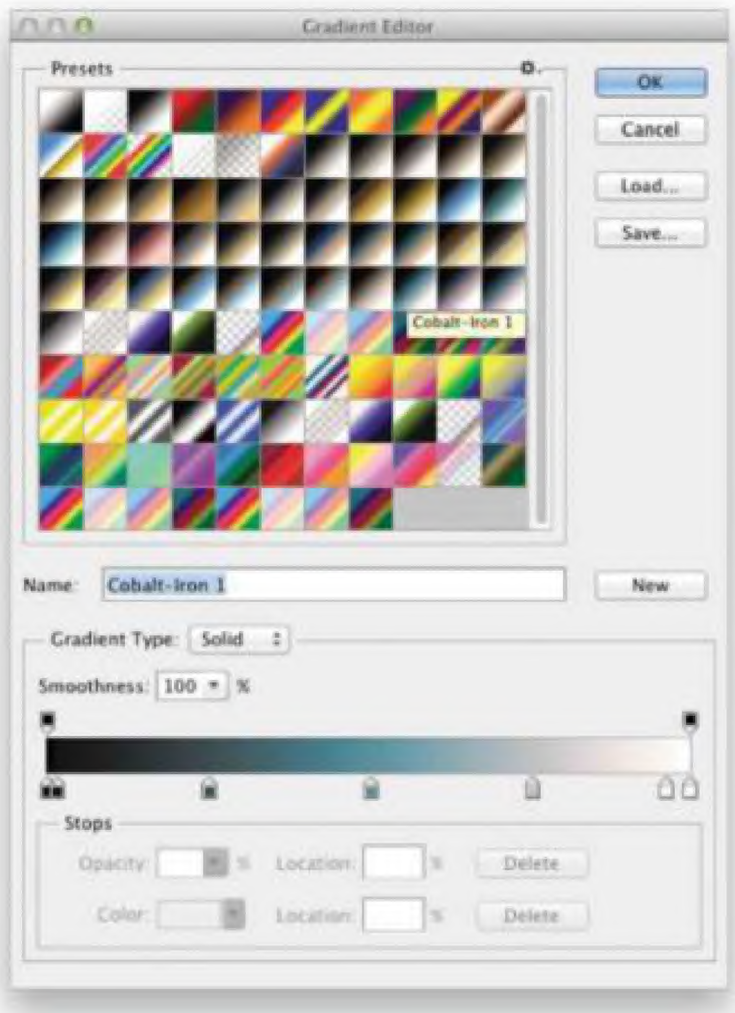
©javarman/Fotolia

Step Sixteen

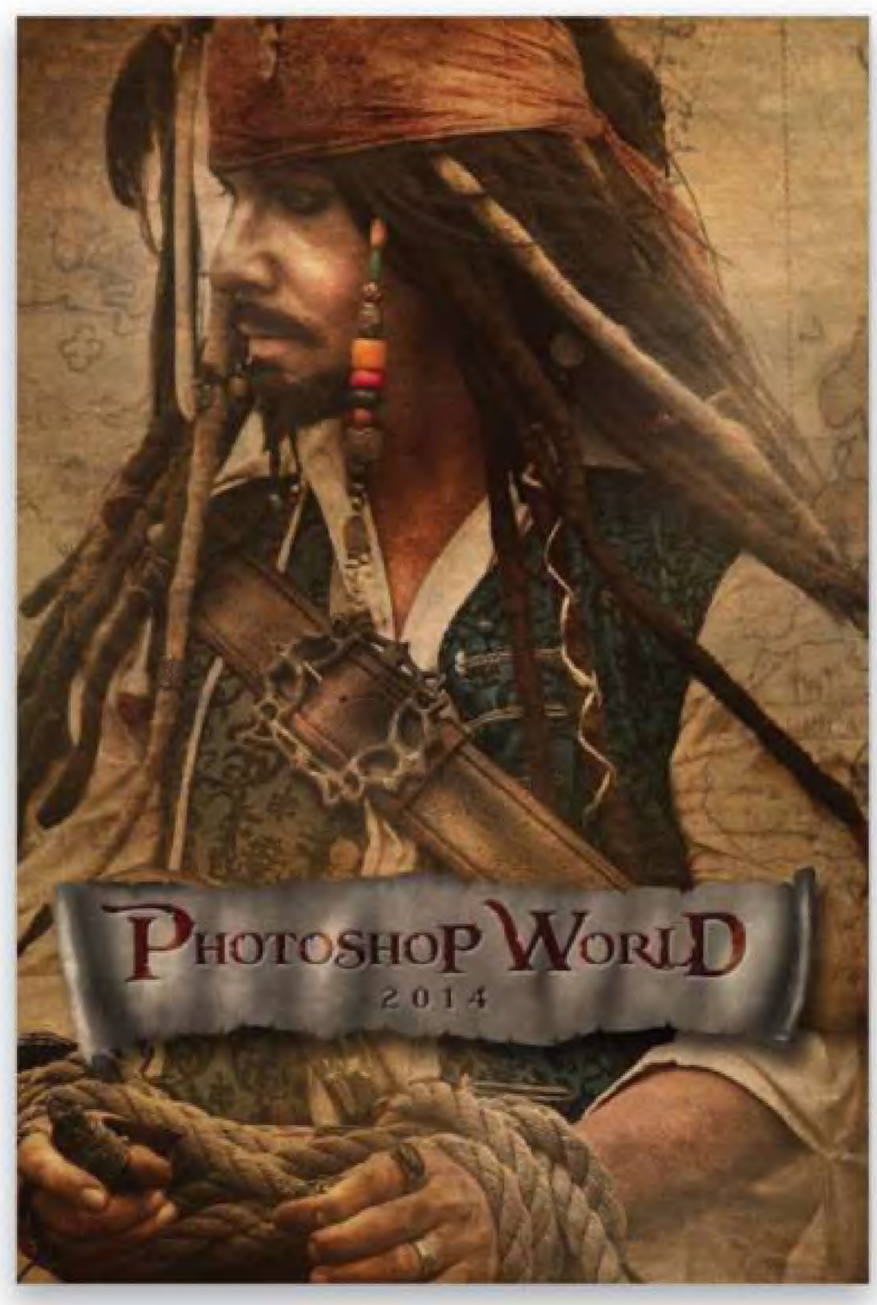
Step Seventeen: To slightly offset the overall warm nature of the image, we're going to use an adjustment layer. Click on the Create New Adjustment Layer icon (half-white, half-black circle) at the bottom of the Layers panel, and choose Gradient Map. In the Properties panel, click on the gradient preview to open the Gradient Editor. Click on the small gear icon at the top right of the dialog, load the preset group called Photographic Toning, and click Append in the resulting dialog. Within that group, locate the one called Cobalt – Iron 1, and select it. Click OK to close the Gradient Editor. Change the layer blend mode to Soft Light and then drop the layer Opacity to 25%.



Step Seventeen



From this point you can tweak any of the layers to whatever you like, but now you have a better understanding of how to blend layers in different ways to achieve a certain look. Try it again with a different image to see what you get.



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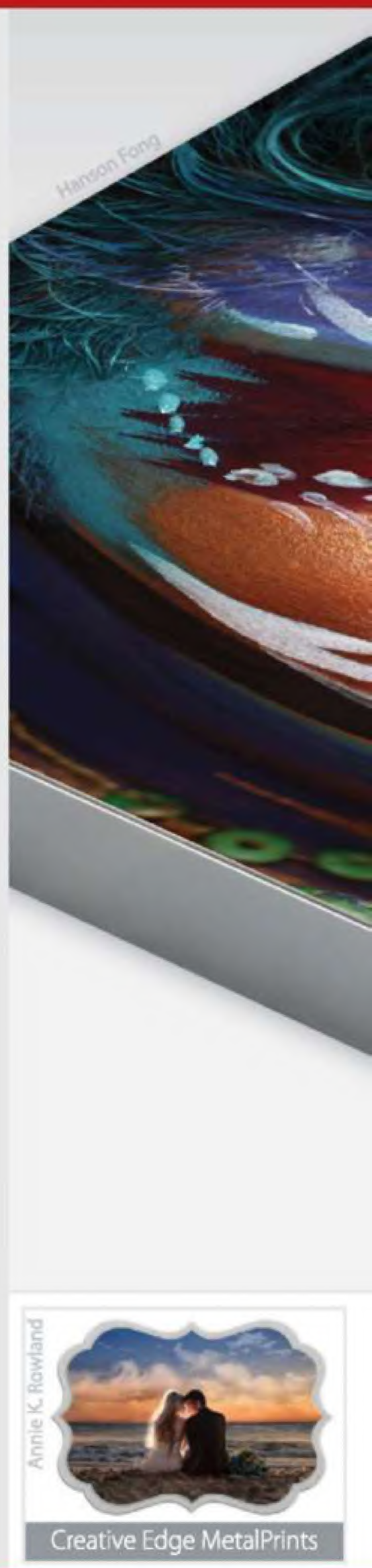

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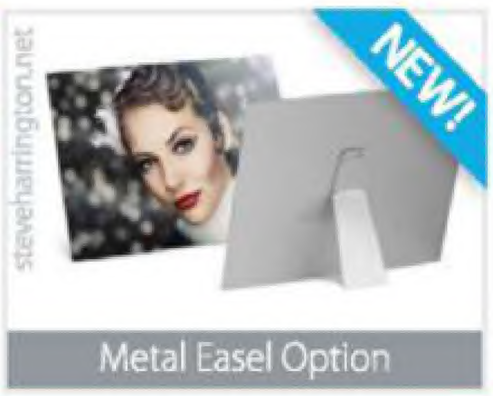

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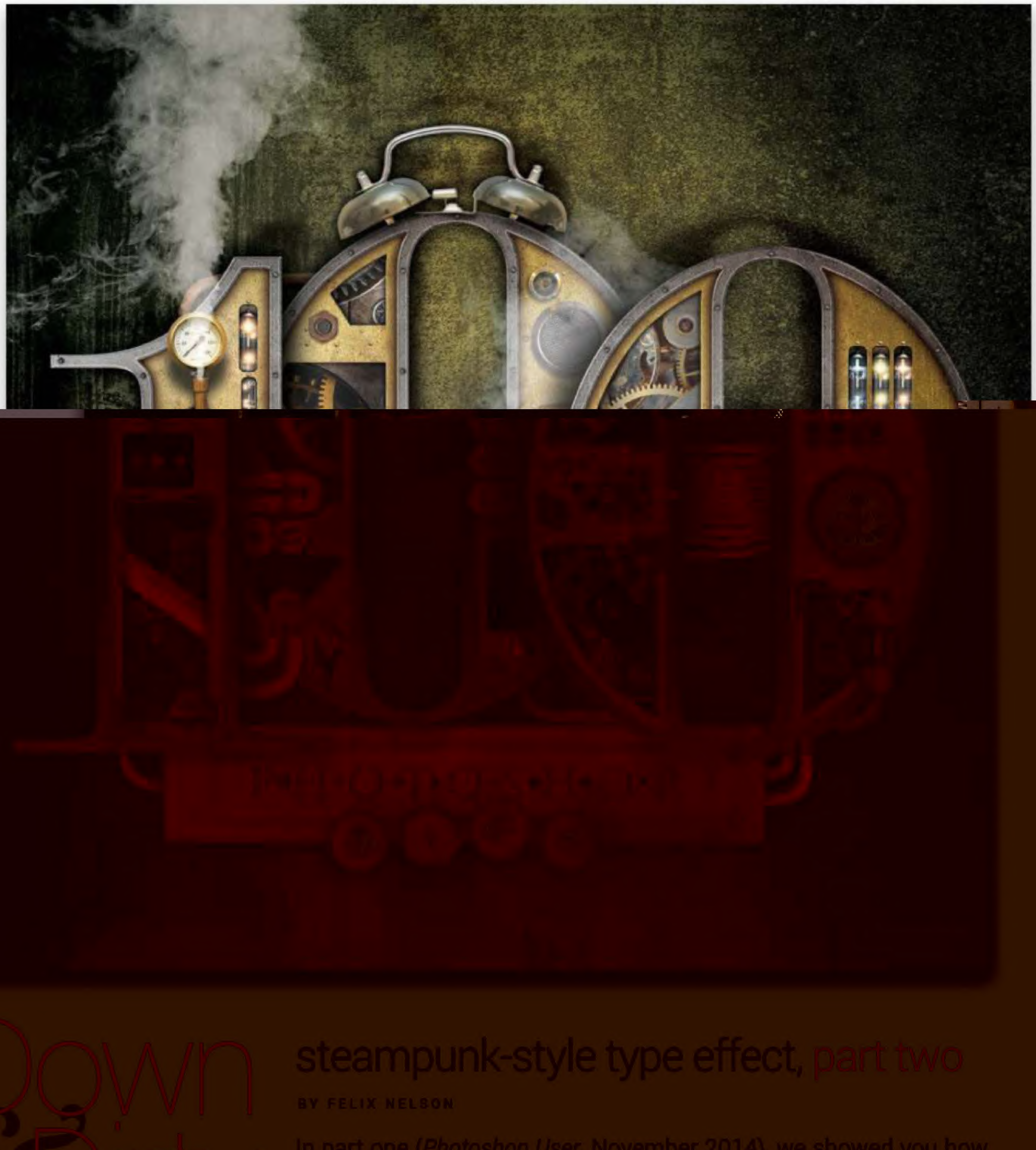


Down & Dirty Tricks

steampunk-style type effect, part two

BY FELIX NELSON

In part one (*Photoshop User*, November 2014), we showed you how to create the semimetallic, beveled-edge base we used for the number 1 of our steampunk-style type effect. In part two, we'll show you how to add gears, gauges, brackets, and bolts to give the numeric character a pseudomechanical, steampunk look. Now, if I could only mix in horror or science fiction genres into my "Down & Dirty Tricks," I could cross those off the bucket list, too.

▶ If you're following along from part one, you should have a document with three layers that form the base of our number 1, as shown.

[*KelbyOne members may download the images we used in this tutorial at http://kelbyone.com/magazine/issue/december-2014. All images are for personal use only.*]

Numeral Texture: ©Alx/Dollar Photo Club

We added a background so the effects are viewed as intended in the final image.

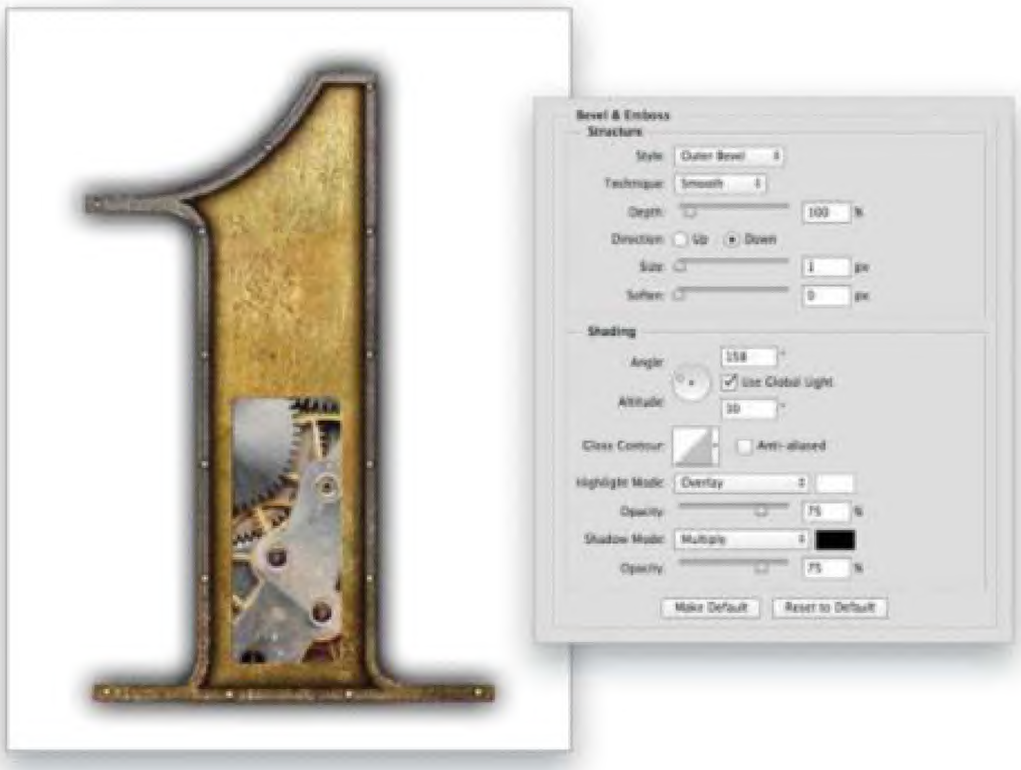
Step One: Open an image of gears (watch gears work well because of their complexity). With the Move tool (V), click-and-drag the gear image into the steampunk document (Layer 4) that we created in part one. Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to bring up the Free Transform bounding box. While holding down the Shift key (to constrain the bounding box), click-and-drag one of the corner adjustment points toward the center to resize it proportionately. When you have the gear image about the same width as the number 1, press Enter to apply the transformation. You may need to reposition the gears over the lower portion of the number 1 (see example).

©Miguel Garcia Saaved/Dollar Photo Club

Step Two: Choose the Rounded Rectangle tool (nested under the Rectangle tool [U]) from the Toolbox. In the Options Bar, choose Path as the Tool Mode, enter 10 pixels for the Radius, and press Enter. Now, click-and-drag to create a path over the lower portion of the number 1. This will add a Work Path to the Paths panel (Window>Paths). Don't make your path too close to the edge (see example), as we'll need the space to add brackets and bolts later on.

Shown with layer Opacity reduced so path is visible

Step Three: With the Work Path selected in the Paths panel, click the Load Path as a Selection icon (dotted circle) at the bottom of the Paths panel. Now click the Add a Layer mask icon (circle in a square) at the bottom of the Layers panel. Click the Add a Layer Style icon (*fx*) and choose Bevel & Emboss from the list. Choose Outer Bevel for Style, 100% for Depth, and 1 px for Size. Set the Direction to Down, and change the Highlight Mode to Overlay. Don't click OK to apply the style just yet.

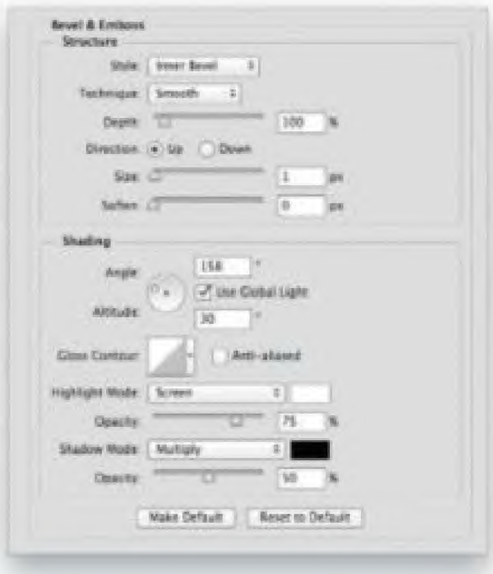


Step Four: Choose Inner Glow from the Styles list on the left side of the Layer Style dialog. Choose Multiply as the Blend Mode. Click on the color swatch, choose black as the color, and click OK. Enter 13 px for Size. Choose Gradient Overlay from the Styles list. Set the Blend Mode to Multiply and lower the Opacity to 60%. Check the Reverse box, choose Reflected as the Style, and 0° for Angle. Enter 46% for Scale and click OK to apply the layer styles.

Step Five: Open an image of a metal brace or bracket. Using the selection tool of your choice, make a selection of a single bracket (the bottom one in our example). With the Move tool, click-and-drag the selection into the steampunk document (Layer 5). Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to bring up the Free Transform bounding box. Resize and reposition the bracket over the upper-left portion of the opening of the number 1. Press Enter to apply the transformation.

©photka/Dollar Photo Club

Step Six: With Layer 5 as the active layer, click the Add a Layer Style icon and choose Bevel & Emboss. Enter 1 px for Size, change the Angle to 158°, and lower the Shadow Mode Opacity to 50%. Choose Outer Glow from the Styles list. Set the Blend Mode to Color Burn, lower the Opacity to 35%, click on the yellow color swatch, choose black as the color, and click OK to close the Color Picker.



Step Seven: Choose Drop Shadow from the Styles list. Set the Blend Mode to Color Burn and lower the Opacity to 25%. Enter 2 px for Distance, 2 px for Size, and click OK to apply the layer styles.

Step Eight: Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) on the Layer 5 thumbnail to load it as a selection. Now press Command-Option-T (PC: Ctrl-Alt-T) to duplicate the selection and bring up the Free Transform bounding box. Move the duplicated metal bracket to the right side and press Enter to apply the transformation. With the duplicated bracket still selected, press Command-Option-T (PC: Ctrl-Alt-T) again and drag the copy below the gears. Continue this until you have brackets around each corner of the opening, and resize and rotate as necessary.

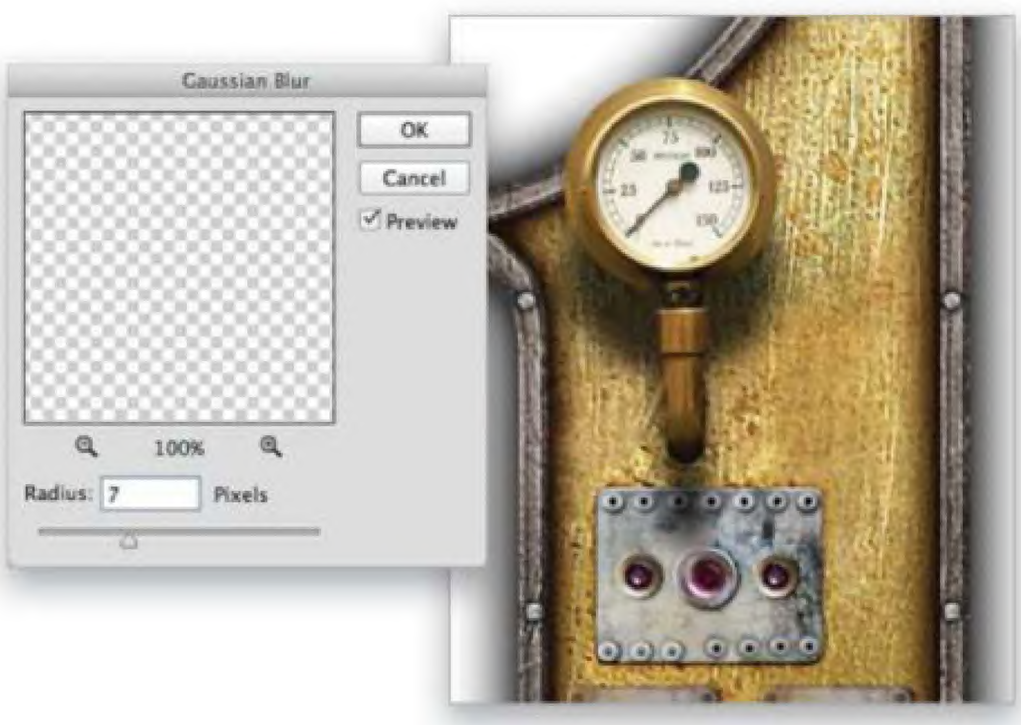
Step Nine: Open more images of metal plates, rivets, and lights. Select and place them into your original image. Resize and rotate the parts into place as needed. Use variations of the Outer Glow, Drop Shadow, and Bevel & Emboss layer styles that we used in previous steps to add more detail. When you're done, click the Create a New Group icon (folder) at the bottom of the Layers panel. Select all of the layers of additional elements and click-and-drag them into the new group (Group 1). This helps keep your document organized.

Add other objects, such as metal plates, lights, and rivets to achieve a more mechanical look.

Step Ten: Open an image of a gauge (one that has some type of piping attached works best). Using the selection tool of your choice, make a selection of the gauge and the lower portion of the pipe (see example). Switch to the Move tool and click-and-drag the selection into the steampunk document. Resize and reposition as needed. Click the Create a New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel. Drag the new layer beneath the gauge layer in the Layers panel.

©Steve Mann/Dollar Photo Club

Step Eleven: Command-click the gauge layer thumbnail to load it as a selection. With black as your Foreground color (press D), press Option-Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace) to fill the selection with black. Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect. Press the Down Arrow key a number of times to move the black fill down (see example). Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, set the Radius to 7 pixels, and click OK. Change the layer blend mode to Multiply, and lower the Opacity to 75%.



Step Twelve: Open a vacuum tube or bulb image. Using the selection tool of your choice, make a selection of a single tube, switch to the Move tool, click-and-drag the selection into the steampunk document, and resize it. Follow Steps Two and Three to create a path and layer mask for the this image (see example), but don't create the layer style from Step Three. Now click the Add a Layer Style icon and choose Inner Shadow. Turn off Use Global Light and set the Angle to 108°. Enter 7 px for Distance and 2 px for Size. Choose Inner Glow from the Styles list. Set the Blend Mode to Multiply. Click on the yellow color swatch, choose black as the color, and click OK. Enter 10 px for Size and click OK to apply the layer styles.

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Step Thirteen: Add a new layer. Press D then X to set the Foreground color to white. Choose the Brush tool (B) from the Toolbox. Using a large, soft-edged brush, paint two white hot spots over the vacuum tube. Click the Add a Layer Style icon and choose Outer Glow. Click the yellow color swatch, choose a reddish color (R:239, G:72, B:39), and click OK. Enter 3 px for Size and click OK to apply the layer style. Change the blend mode to Overlay in the Layers panel.

Step Fourteen: When you change the blend mode, you'll lose some intensity. To get that glowing-tube look back, simply duplicate the layer by dragging it onto the Create a New Layer icon to complete the effect. ■

In the final image, we added two other steampunked numbers, text, copper tubing, and some steam to achieve the mechanical, steam-engine effect we were looking for.

Images courtesy of Dollar Photo Club

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Down & Dirty Tricks

it's a wrap

BY PETE COLLINS

This project is the gift that keeps on giving. Not only can you make great one-of-a-kind wrapping paper, but this technique can also be used to make patterns for wallpaper or any other patterned background that you might want to design.

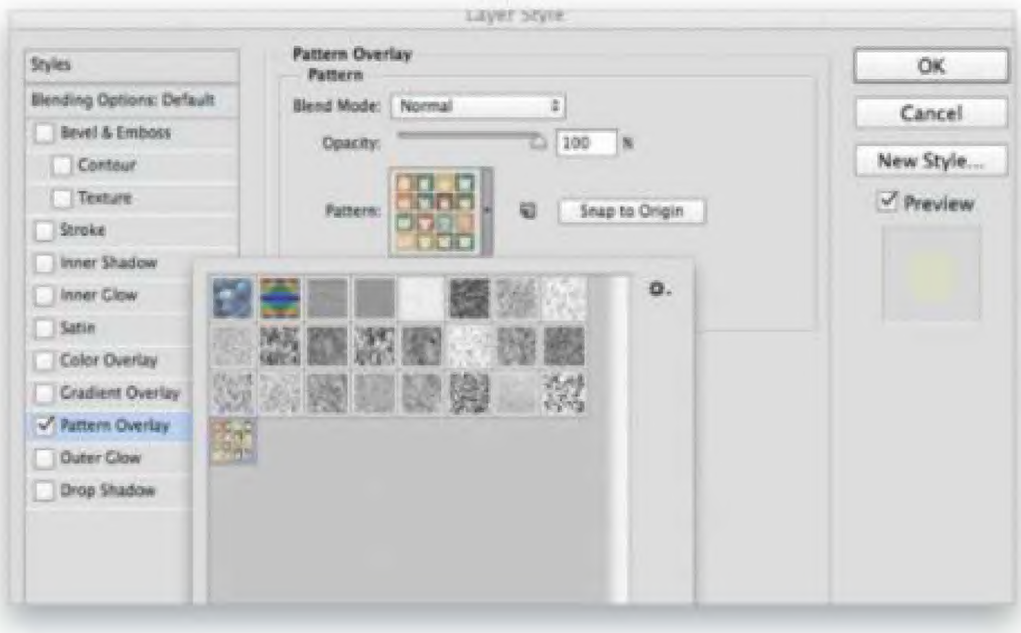
▶ **Step One:** This is a vector image purchased through Fotolia.com. If you aren't comfortable using path-based images, don't worry; inside the ZIP file of every download is a JPEG version of the image. Now you have the best of both worlds if you ever want to start playing around with vector graphics at a later date.

Open the gift wrap image and choose Edit>Define Pattern. This works because the image is less than 5,000-pixels wide and its background allows for easy tiling of the boxes.

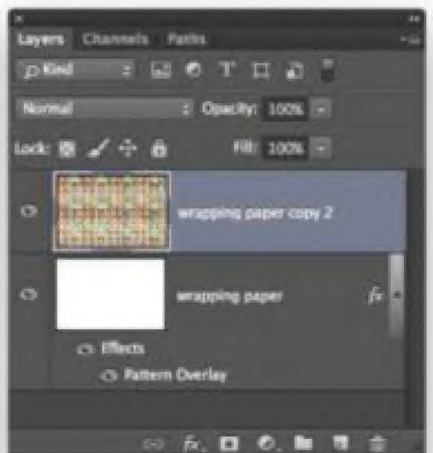
[*KelbyOne members may download the file used in this tutorial at http://kelbyone.com/magazine/issue/december-2014. All files are for personal use only.*]

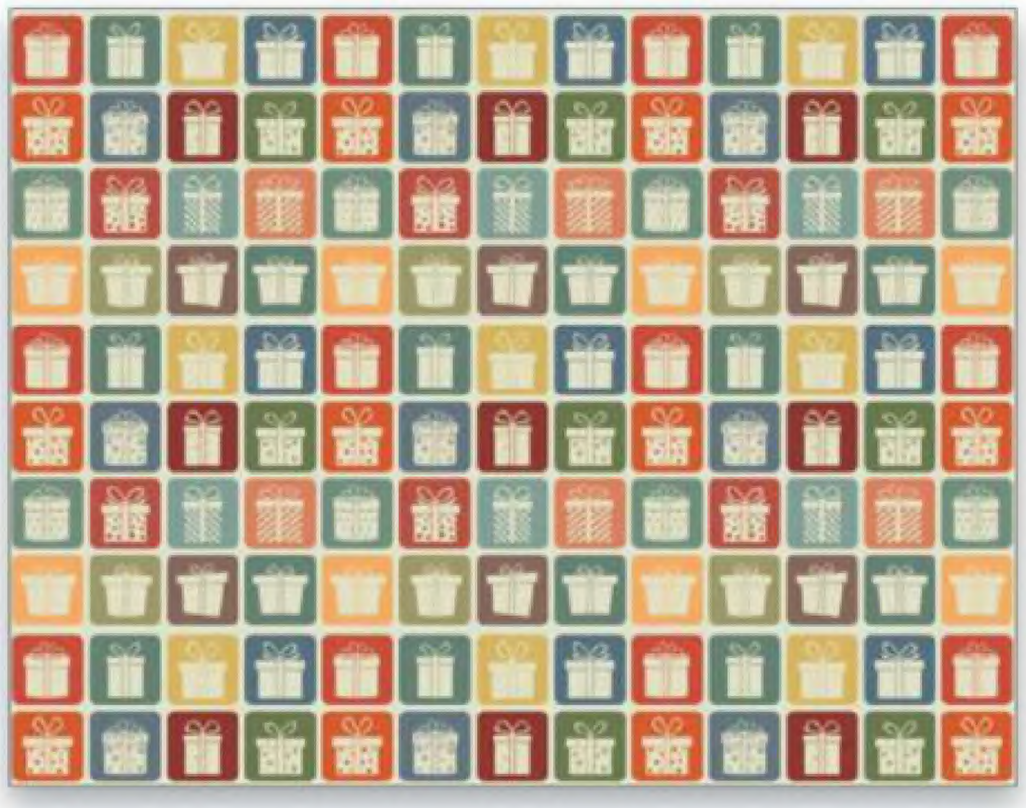
Step Two: Choose File>New to create a new document the size of the paper that you want to use: larger for print and smaller for the Web. When in doubt, it's better to make it larger and reduce it than doing the reverse. For this one, create a 17x11" tabloid-size document at 300 ppi. The new document will open with a white Background layer that's locked. Simply click on the lock icon in the Layers panel to unlock the layer, change it to a regular layer, and Rename it Layer 0. If you'd like to change the name of Layer 0, double-click on it and enter a descriptive name (we renamed ours "wrapping paper").

Step Three: Double-click to the right of the layer name to bring up the Layer Style dialog. Click on Pattern Overlay in the Styles list on the left, click the down-facing arrow next to the Pattern thumbnail, and choose the new pattern you created, which should be the last thumbnail in the menu. (You can use the Scale slider to change the size of the pattern, which is pretty neat.) Click OK to close the Layer Style dialog.

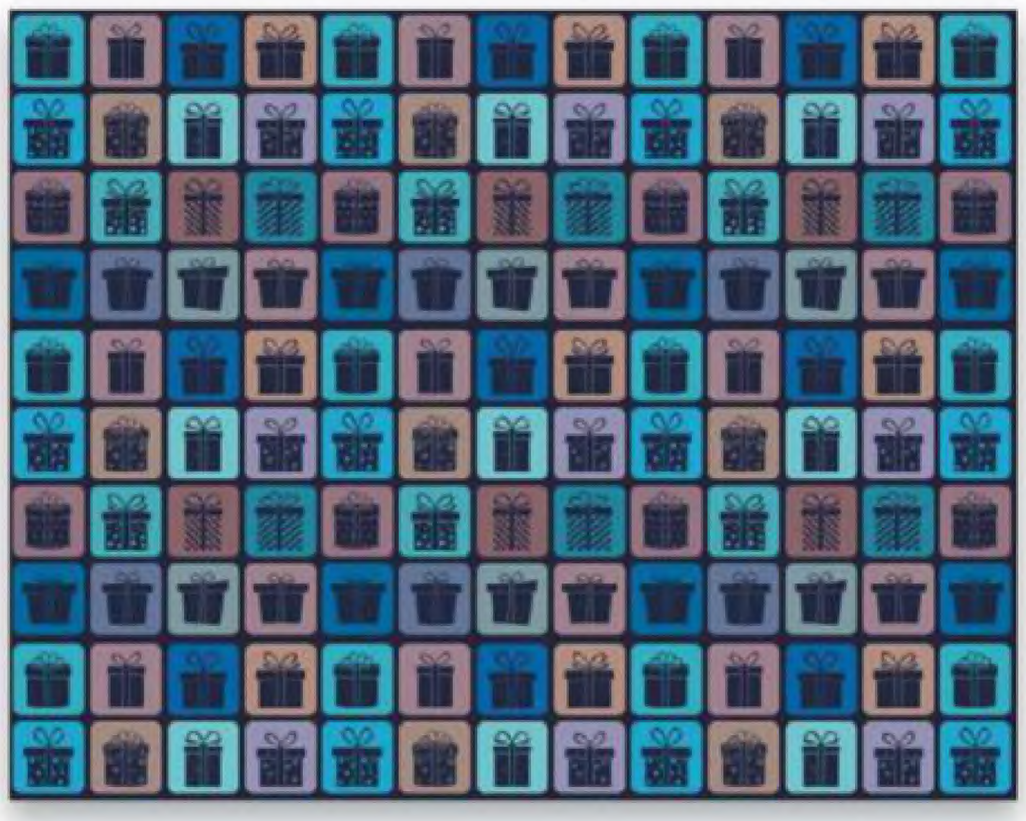


Step Four: You could stop right here and have fun playing with your new pattern, but if you want to use that pattern in another file or transform the paper to wrap around a box, its current form will constantly edit with every change. Press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) twice to make two copies of that layer with the pattern. Now select the top two layers in the Layers panel and press Command-E (PC: Ctrl-E) to merge those two together. Now you have set the pattern as a single layer that can be easily transformed. You can now cut out sections and wrap all kinds of presents.

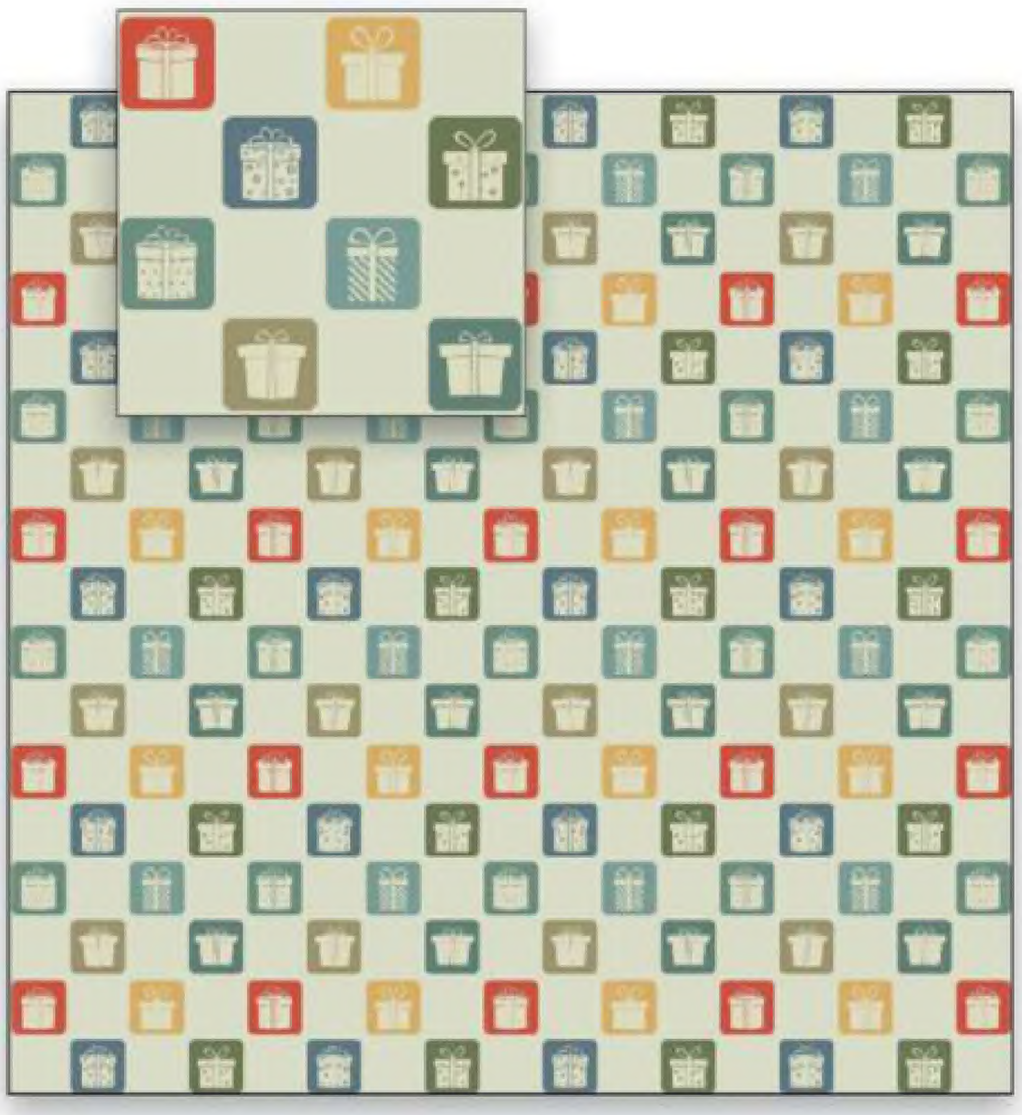




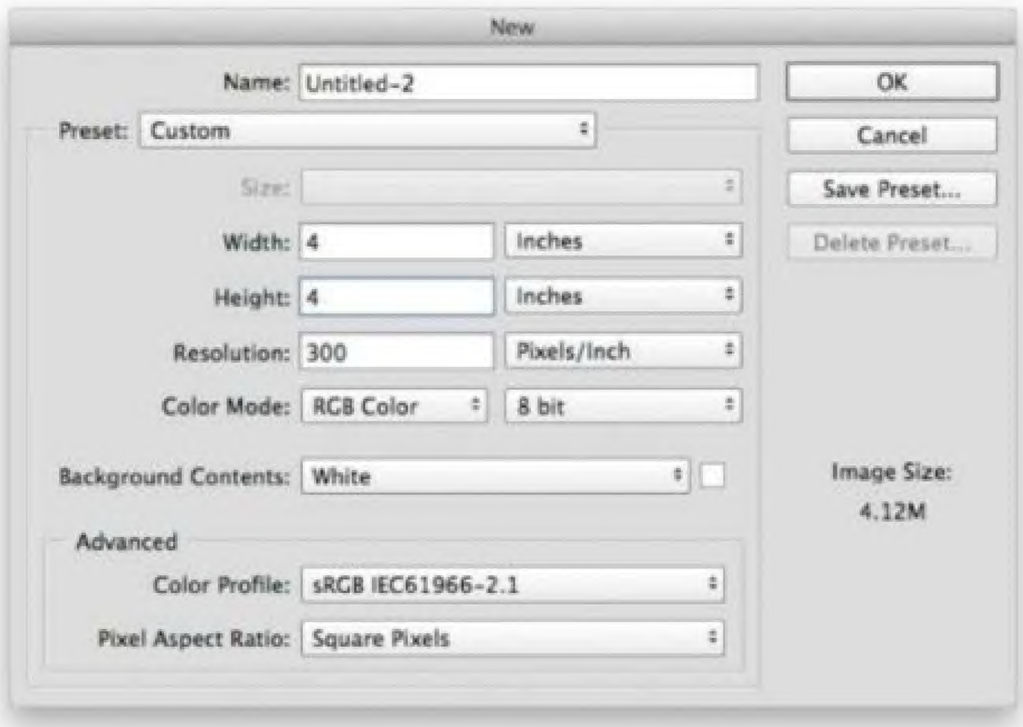
Step Five: With your initial base sheet of patterns, there are plenty of options available; for example, you could simply make a copy of the layer (Command-J [PC: Ctrl-J]) and invert it (Command-I [PC: Ctrl-I]), or click the Create New Adjustment Layer icon (half-white, half-black circle) at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Hue/Saturation to recolor it.



Step Six: If you want to create a different pattern layout, return to the original download file to alter the pattern. Choose the Eyedropper tool (I) and click on the background color to sample it. Now choose the Rectangular Marquee tool (M), drag out a square over one of the boxes, and press Option-Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace) to fill the selection with the sampled color. Now press-and-hold Command-Option (PC: Ctrl-Alt) and click-and-drag the selection two boxes over to create an alternating pattern. Continue dragging the selection onto the remaining alternating boxes, and press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect. Now you can create a new pattern following the same steps as before, and the end result has a completely different look.



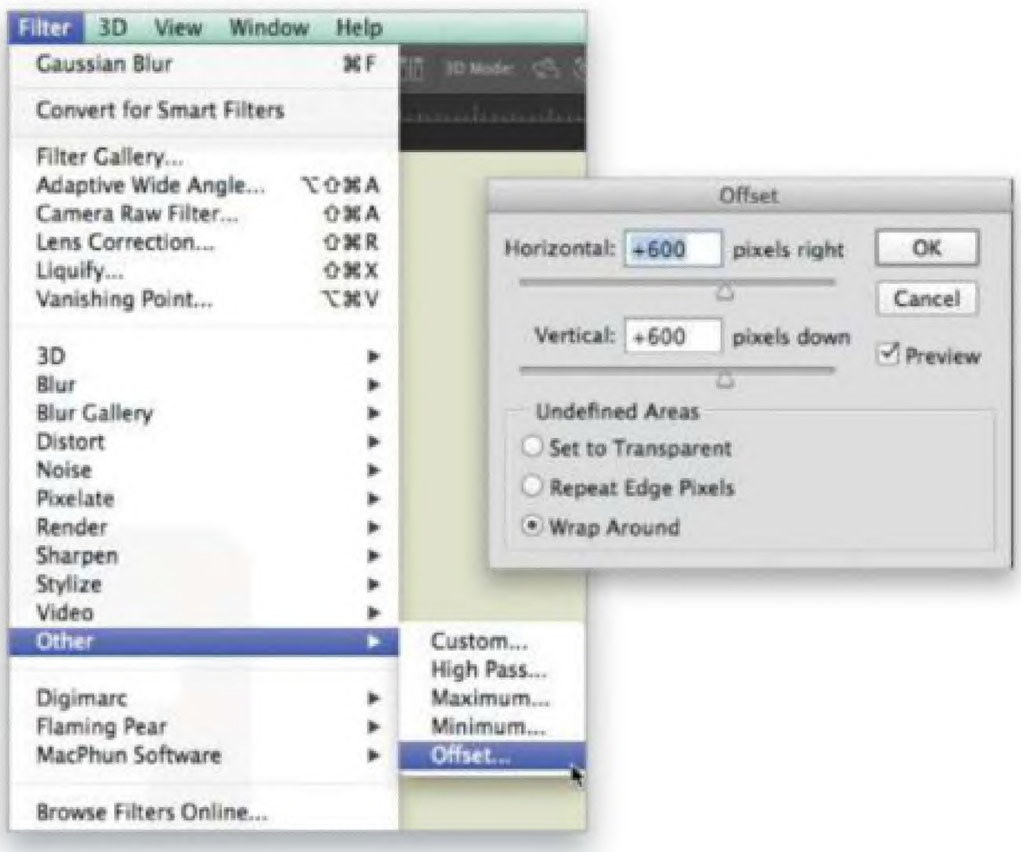
Step Seven: Up until now, we've been making simple patterns, but let's get a little fancy. Instead of using the original image's canvas, let's make a new one that will make things easier for the remaining steps. You can make it any size you like as long as you can figure out the halfway point of both the width and the height. To make it easy, let's create a new document that's 4x4" at 300ppi. That means the midpoint for each side is 4 x 300 ÷ 2 = 600 pixels. You'll understand why in a moment.



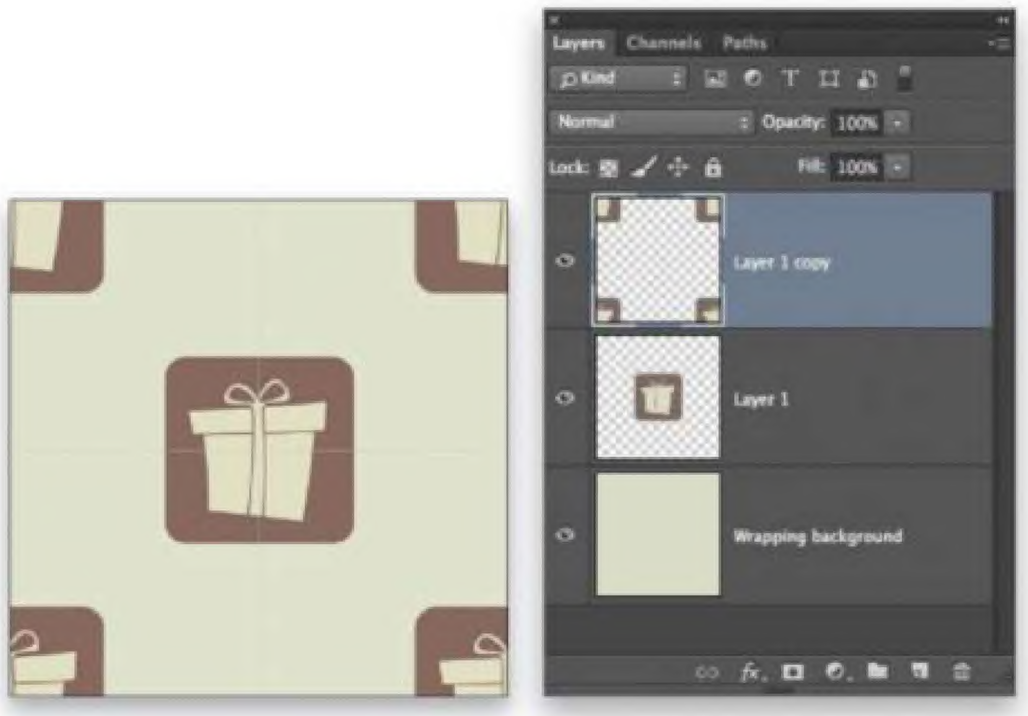
Step Eight: With the Foreground color set to the same color you sampled with the Eyedropper tool in Step Six, press Option-Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace) to fill the document with that color. Choose the Rectangular Marquee tool and select one of the squares from the original image. Hold the Shift key while dragging out the selection to constrain the proportion. This isn't absolutely necessary, but helpful.

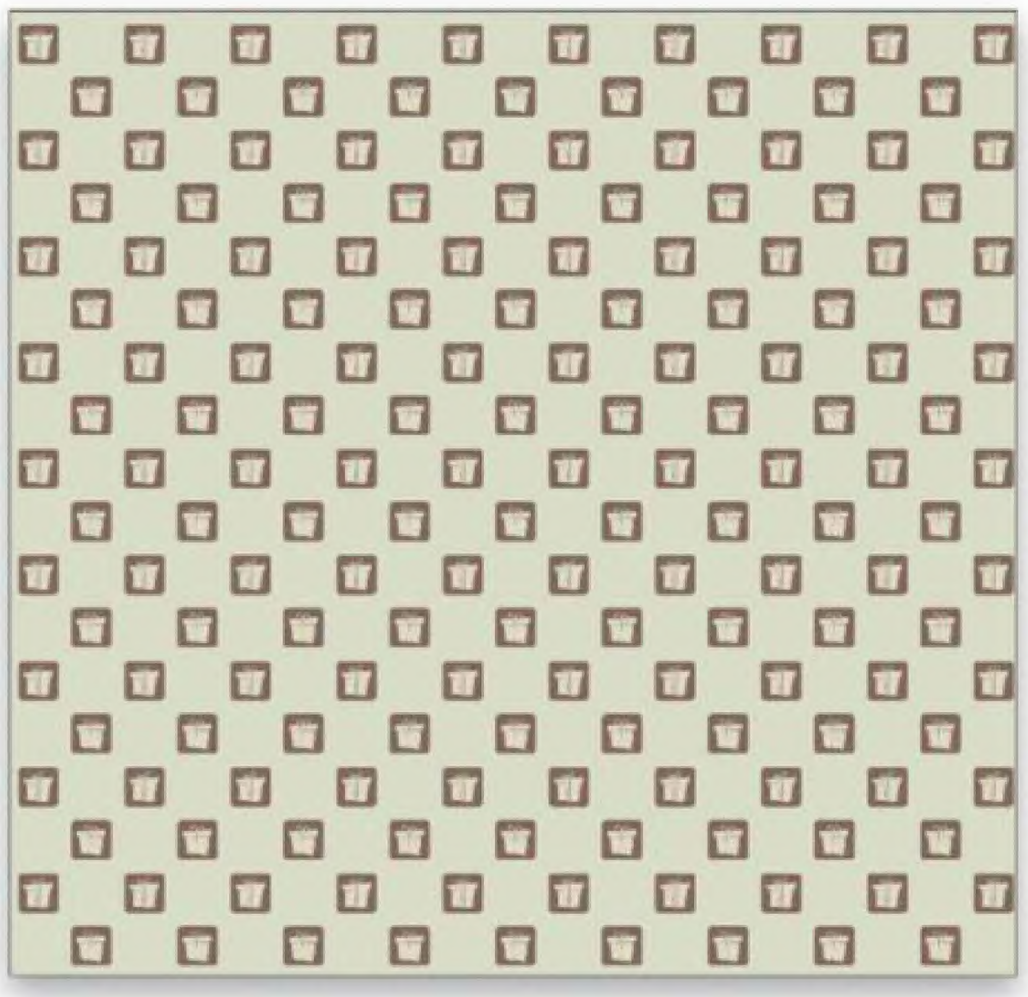
Step Nine: Now, while holding down the Shift key, use the Move tool (V) to drag-and-drop that selection to the new 4x4" document. If your rulers aren't showing, press Command-R (PC: Ctrl-R), then drag out a horizontal guide and a vertical guide to the center of the document. Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to bring up Free Transform, press-and-hold Option-Shift (PC: Ctrl-Shift), and click-and-drag on a corner handle to increase the size of the gift box from the midpoint, as shown. Press Enter to commit the transformation, then press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) to make a copy of that layer.

Step Ten: With the new top layer selected, choose Filter> Other>Offset to bring up the Offset dialog. This is where knowing the midpoint of your canvas will pay off. Make sure the Wrap Around option is on. Type 600 in both the Horizontal and Vertical fields. This will cut the image into four pieces and place quarters into the corners. You can play around with the sliders and get a feel for what's going on, but the bottom line is if you plug in the halfway point of the image for both axes, it will do this. Click OK.



Step Eleven: Repeat Steps One through Four to make a new pattern. You can do this with any image if you understand the concept. Once you start playing with Offset like this, you'll probably make a whole bunch of patterns. They may or may not come out a bit crazy, but that's half the fun.





Step Twelve: When you have your sheets of wrapping paper, one of the easiest things to do is cut out squares of the patterned paper with the Rectangular Marquee tool, use the Move tool to drag the selection to a photo or artwork that you'd like to gift wrap, and use Free Transform (Command-T [PC: Ctrl-T]) to manipulate the shape and size. For example, if you're applying your wrapping paper to a box, Right-click in the Free Transform bounding box and choose Distort. Now drag the four corners of the paper onto the four corners of one of the sides of the box. If the box is white, then simply change the blend mode to Multiply in the Layers panel to take advantage of the shading, and voilà, you have a wrapped present.

Now that you have a better understanding of how to build patterns, you can make your holidays bright and full of good cheer. Nothing like a quick way to create design elements that will make even the most Scrooge-like boss smile. Merry Christmas! ■

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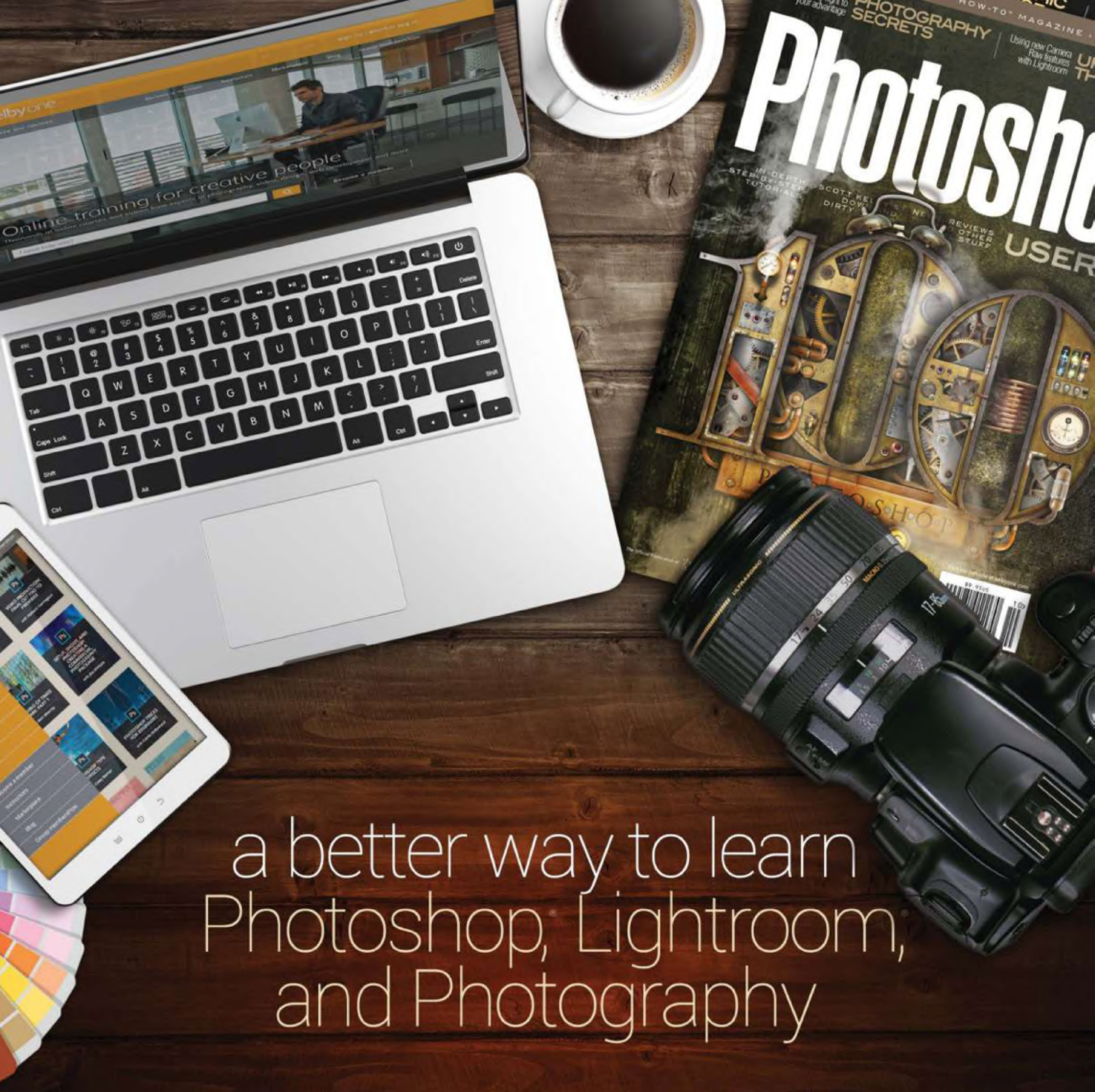

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DesignMakeover

JAKE WIDMAN

CLIENT
Royal Caribbean Bakery / Caribbean Food Delights
www.royalcaribbeanbakery.com / www.caribbeanfooddelights.com

royal treatment

[before]

"...the two agree that the company would benefit from something more contemporary."

Jeanette and Vincent HoSang, immigrants from Jamaica of Chinese descent, started selling fried chicken along with Jamaican patties and bakery products at their store in the Bronx in the mid 1970s. The patty business took off, and they moved to a larger facility in the Bronx in 1978; that was the beginning of the Royal Caribbean Bakery.

As the Jamaican patty business kept growing, it eventually surpassed the bakery business. The increased output required the company to move the patty production to a different, larger facility in 1994; they named the new operation Caribbean Food Delights. They've continued to grow and now have the capacity to turn out 40,000 patties per hour.

However, their logo hasn't kept pace with the sophistication of the business. "We didn't think anything of it until I took an Adobe Web and graphic design course last year and showed our previous website to my professor," says Simone HoSang, the founders' daughter and the company's director of nutrition and food science. The professor, Eugenio Solis de Ovando, advised HoSang that the logo was old-fashioned, too busy, and almost looked like clip art.

HoSang and company PR director, Janice Julian, do like some things about the logo—they think the red, gold, and green combination of colors suits the company's Caribbean origins. Julian also likes that the logo is bright and reflects Jamaican spice and culture. Nevertheless, the two agree that the company would benefit from something more contemporary. Julian would also like to see a logo that projects longevity, resilience, and market dominance. "We are the number one manufacturer of Caribbean frozen food products," she says.

We asked three designers to create a new logo for each branch of the company that would represent the company's current success in the market while still respecting its "down-home" island roots.

makeover submissions

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DESIGNER
Jose Dacal
www.dacaldesign.com

[after]

"I decided to work with the original vision and update it to bring out the true, current heart of the company."

I thought the original logos for the Royal Caribbean Bakery and Caribbean Food Delights were great at the time they were designed. But they're somewhat crudely done and don't take advantage of all the new features and filters Adobe Illustrator CS6 has to offer, which makes them look dated.

I wanted to take the company's long history into account and respect the fact that their brand is very much established. I decided to work with the original vision and update it to bring out the true, current heart of the company. For example, I kept the existing crown for the Royal Caribbean Bakery logo, but I polished it with gold colors, gradients, and rhinestones to really give it the royal treatment. The floral element on each side of the circle, reminiscent of money and valuable certificates, lends a sense of wealth. My font of choice was Trajan Pro, an elegant, classic display font.

For the Caribbean Food Delights variation, I decided to keep everything the same but replace the crown with a beautiful Caribbean beach (and change the words, of course). I used the Pen tool in Illustrator and my mouse to draw a palm tree leaf, which I then copied-and-pasted in at different angles to create the foliage. A simple curved line created the trunk.

For the sky, I wanted to go with colors that reminded me of an island sunset. I started by drawing a circle and added colors using the gradient feature. I did the same for the water. For the waves, I drew a stretched-out cloud and put spikes on its back to give it movement.

I used the same fonts and colors on the bottom of both logos. That way, they go together in a harmonious way.

about the designer

JOSE DACAL

Jose is the owner of Dacal Design, located in La Quinta, California. His love of art started at the age of 7 when he was brought into the family business, the Miami Billboard and Sign Company. That experience gave him a fascination for creating printed art, billboards, and sign manufacturing. On top of that, he learned how to operate large presses at the school of Graphics and Commercial Arts at Miami Lakes Tech.

Jose's all-around knowledge allows him to understand every aspect of the business. He specializes in everything from creating branding for small companies to designing hundred-foot-tall billboards for the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas. Besides 2D projects like logos and posters, he also designs vehicle wraps for cars and trucks. For more than 25 years, he has used his creativity, eye for detail, and ability to work quickly to satisfy his many clients.

APPLICATION USED: **Adobe Illustrator CS6**

DESIGNER
Eric Williams
www.luminousrobots.com

[after]

"I wanted the crown to be a simpler shape than the existing one, so it would be clearer when the logo is printed very small..."

My first experiments on this project included palm fronds that were drawn in Adobe Photoshop and vectorized with Vector Magic, but the final logo versions I chose were done entirely in Adobe Illustrator.

I experimented with colors other than the familiar red-gold-green (and black-gold-green of the Jamaican flag), but I returned to this standard palette when it seemed to convey the brand more clearly. Also, after looking at their website for a while, I decided the slogan "Jamaican Me Hungry" called for the colors of the Jamaican flag instead of just the colors of sky, water, and tropical plants like I had been using, which could be appropriate for Hawaii or any number of areas.

The keywords that were suggested—especially longevity, dominance, and the number one manufacturer of Caribbean frozen food products—all pointed toward retaining the crown from their existing logo, so I discarded my early drafts that featured gentle, relaxed palm fronds. I wanted the crown to be a simpler shape than the existing one, so it would be clearer when the logo is printed very small, and I wanted it to encompass the entire design.

The keywords also steered me toward replacing their existing fonts with a firmer slab-serif font, and I settled on Bevan, which was designed by Vernon Adams. This font also conveys the more contemporary feeling that the company wanted to reach. I concentrated on the central company titles, omitting the additional words. Those added phrases are important and descriptive, but I didn't feel like they belonged directly inside the logos. The company now has the flexibility to place the additional phrases elsewhere, according to how much space is available on various packages, on their letterhead, website, and so on.

about the designer

ERIC WILLIAMS

Eric Williams has worked as a designer, illustrator, and cartoonist for 30 years, and earned an A.S. degree in digital media from College of the Redwoods in Northern California in 2006. After graduation, he set up shop in Humboldt County, California—home of the giant redwoods—and continues to work mostly with clients in that area.

Eric creates logos, illustrations, websites, and custom comics, as well as advises clients about copyrights, trademarks, and branding. Some projects are done digitally from start to finish, while others begin with pencil and paper. Specializing in carefully vectorized adaptations of public domain art, he brings attention, whenever possible, to forgotten cartoonists and illustrators whose work lingers like ghosts in the forgotten corners of the vast spaces of the Internet. In his free time, he works on assorted projects, including comics, writing, animation, and 3D graphics.

APPLICATION USED: **Adobe Illustrator CS5**

DESIGNER
Micael Butial
www.behance.net/micaelbutial

[after]

"...the identity is flexible—the arrangements and brand names can be mixed and matched as appropriate."

Caribbean Food Delights and the Royal Caribbean Bakery say they're the number one manufacturer of Caribbean frozen food products, and they've been in business for more than 36 years. The goal here is to design a new identity that represents the company's strength and supremacy. I set out to create branding that could be instantly recognized with a strong presence on their packaging and also on the Web, as well as a flexible mark that could work both in print and online to ensure brand recognition across different media.

The existing branding is old-fashioned, there's too much going on, and the logo is used inconsistently in different media. My solution is to create two different lockups for the logo mark and the brand typography. The first lockup has the logo mark on the left and the brand type on the right, and the second lockup puts the logo mark on top with the type on the bottom. This way, the identity is flexible—the arrangements and brand names can be mixed and matched as appropriate.

I chose to continue using a crown because it communicates royalty and leadership. The company wants to be the leader of manufacturing Caribbean foods. I also chose to incorporate their main product, the patty. The patty also represents a person wearing the crown and seems to be smiling, too.

As for the colors, I decided to keep the same colors that are used in their current logo—red, yellow, and green. I felt that these colors best represented the Caribbean theme. Also, it will be easier for the customers to recognize a new identity if the colors are the same as the ones they're already familiar with.

For the typography, I used a sans-serif font, Refrigerator Deluxe. It's a neutral, easy-to-read font that works well for their packaging and on their website.

about the designer

MICAEL BUTIAL

Micael Butial is a passionate designer who is studying graphic and Web design at The Art Institute of California—San Francisco and will graduate December 2014. He also works as a visual designer intern at Switch Communications in San Francisco.

Micael grew up in the Philippines and started painting portraits at a young age. After moving to the United States, he continued painting at a local theme park and then decided to pursue a career in the art industry. Micael's top skills are typography, branding, and illustration. His works have been featured in The Dieline, AIGA Member Portfolios, Serifs & Sans, and in the CSS Design Awards. In early 2014, Micael won an award and scholarship from the Hyatt hotel chain for a design that will be featured on their Canvas Merlot wine. Micael is seeking a career in design in the technology sector and hopes to open his own design firm in the future.

APPLICATION USED: **Adobe Illustrator CC**

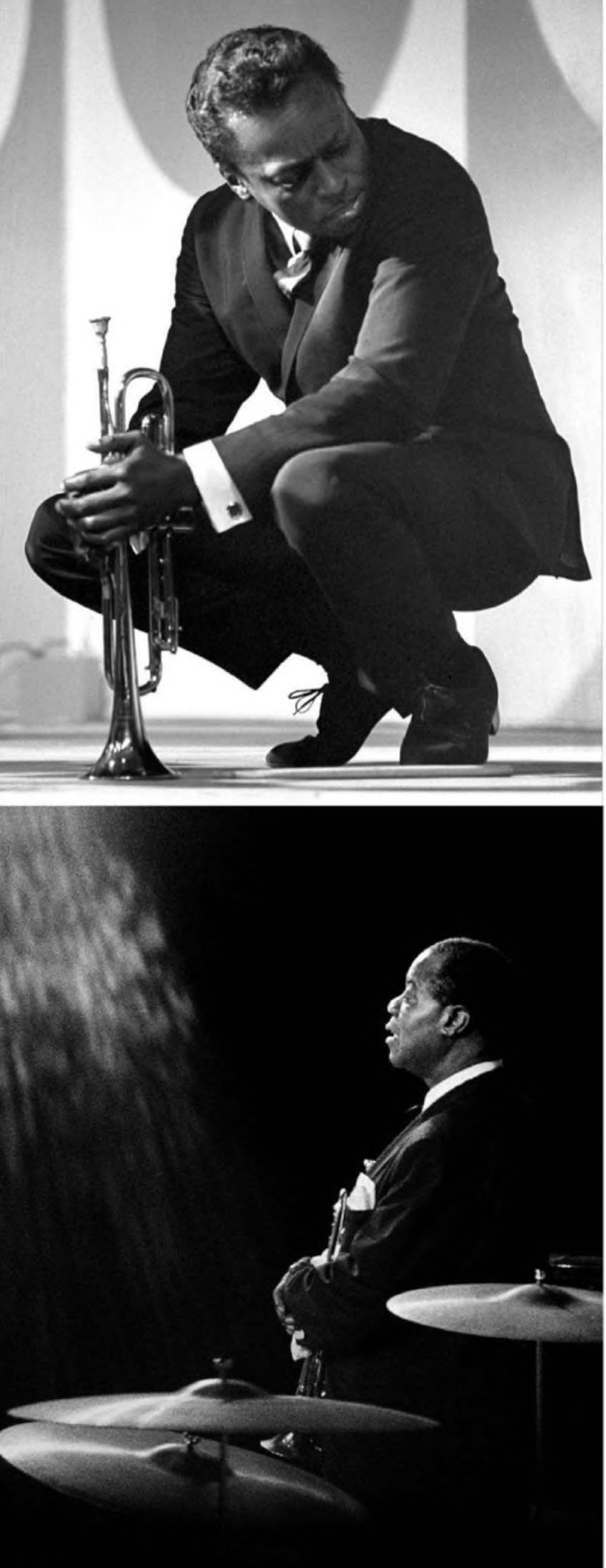
COLUMN ›› by design

Janine Warner

ADOBE MAX WRAP-UP: A GUIDE TO ADOBE'S GROWING LIST OF WEB-DESIGN PROGRAMS

From the ever-popular Dreamweaver, which is coming up on its 20th birthday, to designer-friendly Muse, which is just coming of age, to the new collection of Edge tools, it's clear that Adobe has made Web and mobile design a high priority.

Before I explore the pros and cons of each of these programs and their latest enhancements, I have to say that what got Web designers most excited at this year's Adobe MAX conference was the new Extract Assets feature in Photoshop, which makes it easier to generate optimized images and code snippets from a PSD file. It's not an exaggeration to say that this one new addition to Photoshop (which is also integrated into Dreamweaver) could save Web designers thousands of hours of tedious work.



A significant number of websites begin life as layered PSDs and the Extract Assets feature is designed to streamline the process of turning those PSD files into optimized images, HTML, and CSS code. Last year, Adobe added Generator to Photoshop, which made saving images for the Web faster and more efficient because you can use it to turn any layer in Photoshop into a GIF, PNG, or JPEG by simply selecting Generate from the File menu and then adding the corresponding extension to the layer name. (For detailed instructions, see my article in the November 2013 issue of *Photoshop User*, p. 102.)

The new Extract Assets feature takes the process a step further by making it possible to optimize images even more efficiently, and to extract code snippets from Photoshop, which can then be pasted into almost any other Web program to re-create complicated design elements, including gradients and drop shadows.

INTRODUCING THE NEW PHOTOSHOP EXTRACT ASSETS FEATURE

There are a few programs on the market (not from Adobe) that claim they can convert a layered PSD into HTML and CSS code automatically, but I've found all of these tools disappointing because interactive websites are too complex to be generated automatically, even from a well-crafted PSD. What's great about the new Extract Assets feature in Photoshop is that it doesn't even try to automatically convert entire layouts. Instead, it's designed to *assist* in the tedious process of turning a layered file into optimized images that can then be reassembled in a Web-design program like Dreamweaver or Muse.

> "What's great about the new Extract Assets feature in Photoshop is that it doesn't even try to automatically convert entire layouts."

Using Extract Assets to get snippets of code out of a PSD, such as the CSS needed to create a gradient or drop shadow, is far more useful than trying to automatically convert an entire page. Most of the tools that try to do that cheat and turn gradients into images. Using CSS, you can create gradients that download much faster and are more efficient to edit if you want to change them later.

USING EXTRACT ASSETS IN DREAMWEAVER

Despite growing competition in the increasingly fragmented Web-design market, Dreamweaver continues to enjoy strong support among Web designers, and Adobe has made a major investment in the program in its latest update, rebuilding the entire code base to upgrade it from a 32-bit to a 64-bit program. When you launch the latest version of Dreamweaver, the most dramatic enhancement to the interface is the addition of the Extract window, which takes up the entire left third of the program's interface.

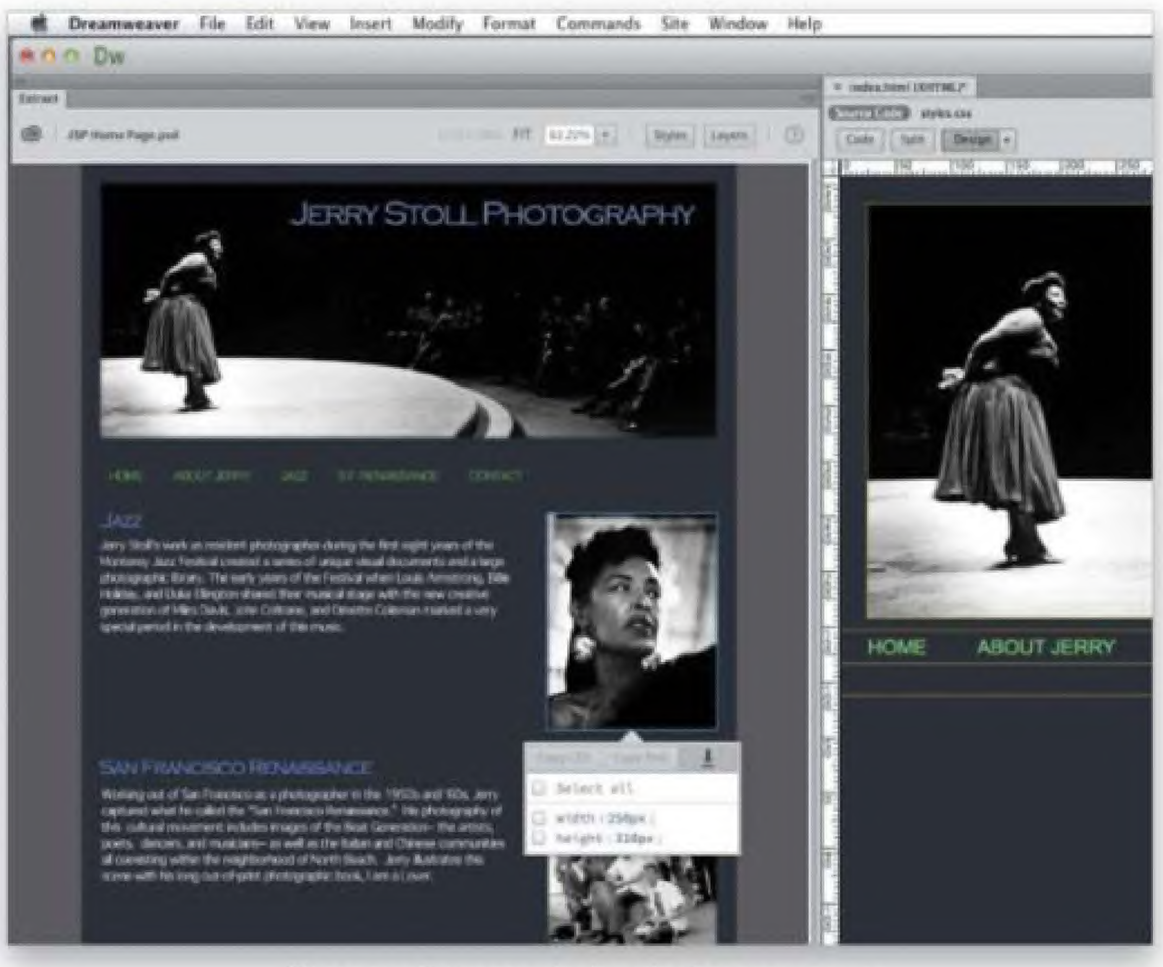
Even if you don't have a copy of Photoshop on your computer, you can use the Extract window to upload any PSD file to Creative Cloud by clicking on Upload PSD (the big plus sign). It took about 3 seconds over my cable modem for the layered PSDs shown in these figures to upload and become available in Dreamweaver. Adobe uses the Cloud to transfer the files to Dreamweaver, and you must have an active Creative Cloud account to use this new feature.

You can upload multiple PSDs and switch from one to another by clicking on its thumbnail. Once a PSD is loaded, you click on any layer (or folder of layers) to extract it as an image and save it directly into your website folder in Dreamweaver. You can also copy colors, text, and code snippets out of the PSD and then paste them into any open file in the main workspace.

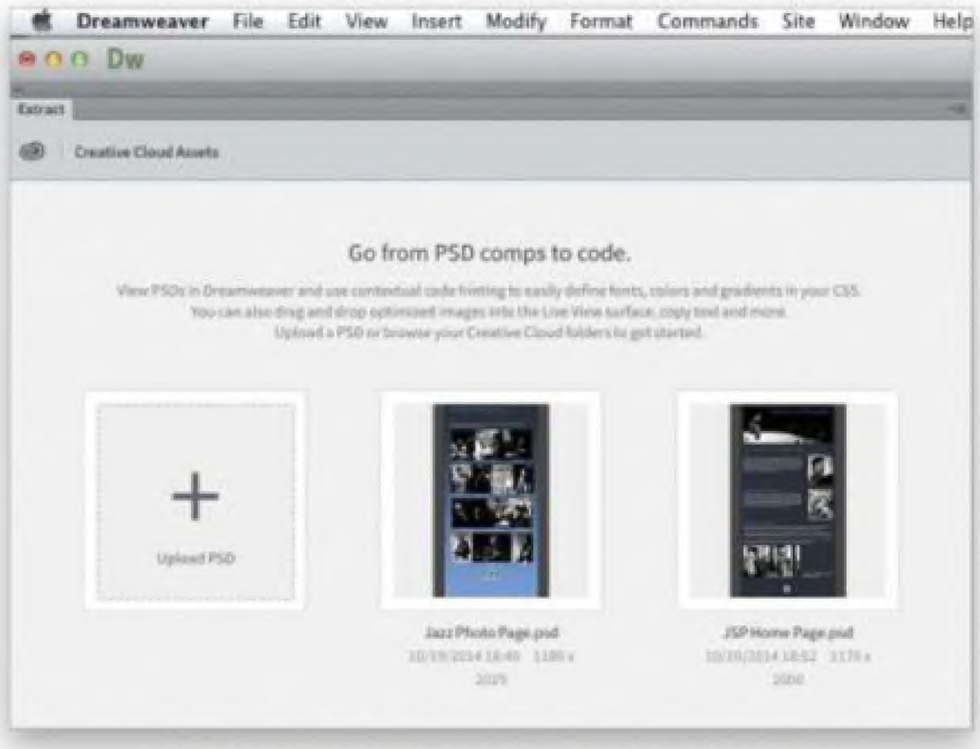
Among other improvements to Dreamweaver, the Live View feature now displays webpages more accurately, and you can do more editing from Live View, which makes design and testing much more efficient.

After teaching and writing about Dreamweaver for nearly two decades, I've come to appreciate its rich set of features, but I understand that many designers find Dreamweaver daunting and are delighted by the more designer-friendly interface now offered by Adobe Muse.

The new Extract Assets feature in Photoshop could save Web designers many hours of work.



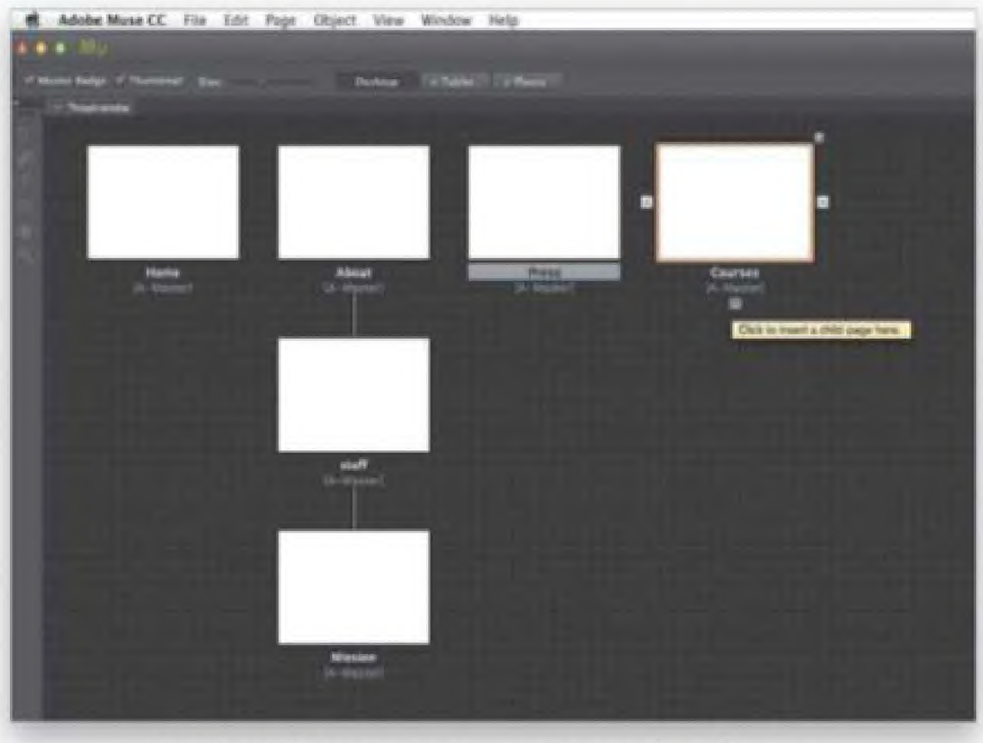
The new Extract window in Dreamweaver takes up about a third of the interface.



With Dreamweaver and the Creative Cloud, you can quickly extract PSDs, as well as copy colors, text, and code snippets out of PSDs.

THE DESIGNER'S MUSE

If you're a fan of InDesign and can't stand the idea of having to learn HTML to create a website, Muse is for you. In just a few intuitive clicks, you can generate a series of pages in Muse and view them in a way that makes it easy to see how pages are related to one another.



In Muse, it's easy to generate a series of pages and see how they are related to one another.

Although there's no Extract Assets panel in Muse (at least not yet), you can still benefit from the ability to more easily generate assets from Photoshop that can then be used to create your designs in Muse.

Because Muse is a design tool, not a programming tool, many designers find they can skip the step of creating the initial design in Photoshop. Indeed, some of my friends who are professional Web designers have found that Muse is a great way to quickly mock up an interactive website, even if they plan to use Dreamweaver or a content-management system to build the final site. (Don't get me wrong, they don't use the code from Muse in the final websites, but it's a nice tool for creating interactive mockups.)

If you look under the hood, you'll find that the automatically generated code that's exported from Muse is not as efficient and easy to edit as most programmers would prefer, and you couldn't even edit the code in Muse if you wanted to. There's an Export feature that spits out the code or sends it directly to your Web host when you're ready to publish.

When you're ready to publish your website that you created in Muse, you can export it as HTML.

If code isn't your concern, the design features in Muse are a joy to work with and you can use it to create highly interactive, modern websites, complete with parallax scrolling and simple animations.

BEHANCE: NOW MORE THAN 4 MILLION STRONG

Front and center at the Adobe MAX keynote was the Behance online creative community, which now boasts more than 4-million registered users. Although it may not be the first place you think of when you consider how to create a website, you can create more

than a simple portfolio if you upgrade to Behance Pro, which is included in the full Creative Cloud subscription.

If you're among the millions of designers, illustrators, and photographers using Behance to showcase your work, you may be pleased to learn that you can easily integrate your Behance portfolio into a Behance Pro website. The pro version of Behance includes only a few basic layouts, but the editing features enable enough customization to create a unique design if all you need is a portfolio site.

rate one page from a project that Adobe used as basis for Edge Code.

Edge Reflow (also still in Preview) was designed to create responsive Web designs, but after a fair amount of testing, I've to say this tool isn't ready for professional use. Although it seems enticing that you can automatically generate a web-page from a PSD using Reflow, you can only generate one page layout at a time, which is limiting when you consider that most responsive websites include at least three designs: one for desktops, one for tablets, and one for smartphones.

THE BEST WAY TO CREATE A WEB GALLERY

Over the years, I've asked numerous people at Adobe what they recommend for quickly and efficiently creating beautiful photo galleries on the Web, but I'm sorry to report I still haven't gotten a good answer. There used to be a Web gallery feature in Dreamweaver, but it was removed years ago. There's also for Photoshop. You'll find a gallery feature in Lightroom, which isn't a bad way to quickly generate a gallery of images to post to the Web, but I find it flawed for two key reasons. First, the best design options in Lightroom require Flash, and most Web designers no longer use Flash because Flash files don't display on iPhones or iPads. Second, the HTML galleries you can create in Lightroom can't easily be integrated into an existing website. By that, I mean you can't insert a Lightroom gallery into a page created in Dreamweaver, Muse, or any other Web program. You can create simple, standalone galleries, which is a handy way to share proofs with clients, but the gallery feature in Lightroom isn't a good way to create a portfolio of your images if you want to add them to your website or blog.

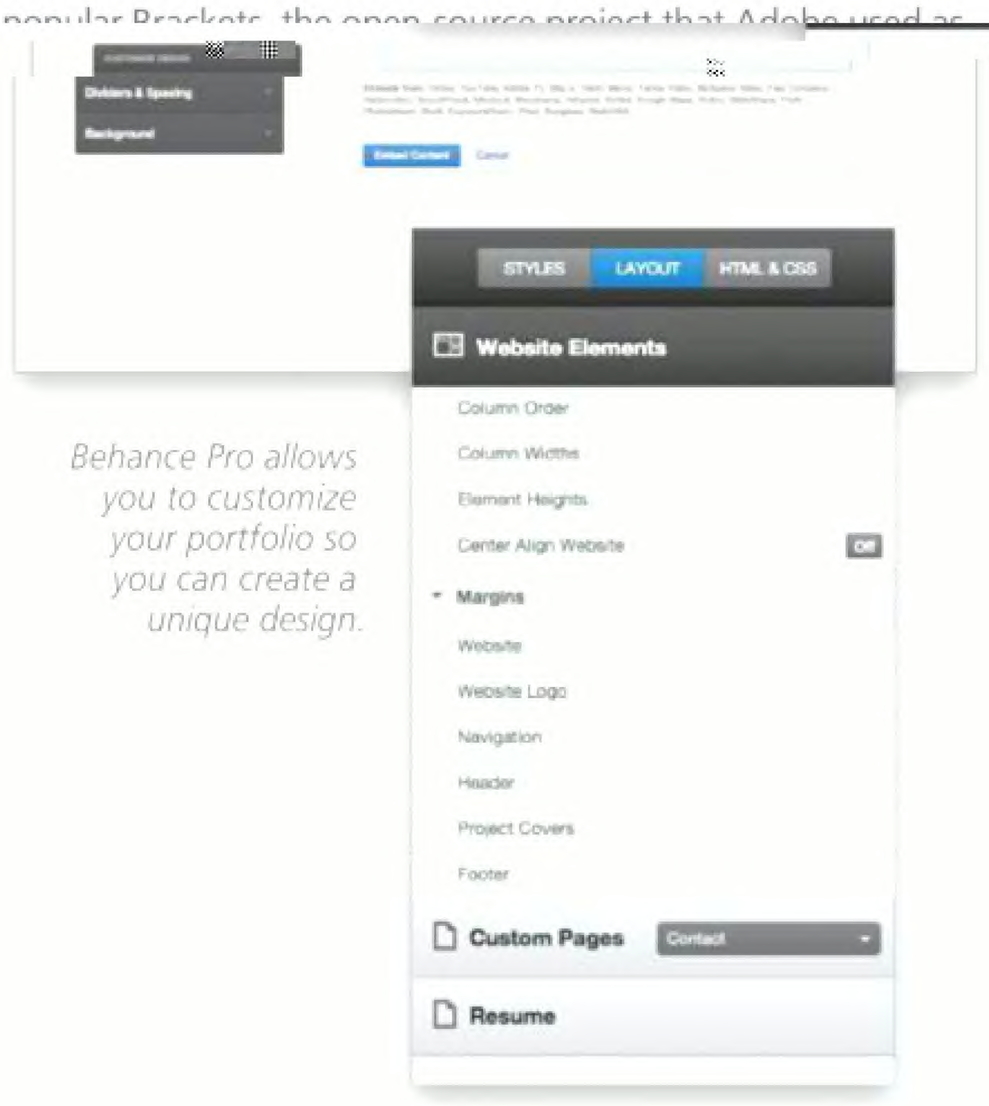
When I asked the photographer who was hired to photograph the Adobe press party how she was planning to post all of the photos she was taking, she said I could find them on Flickr. ■

ALL IMAGES BY JERRY STOLL

and integrated into Muse, Dreamweaver, and other Web-design programs.

Edge Inspect is a cross-browser testing tool that can help ensure your Web and mobile designs work across different devices. Using Inspect, you can wirelessly connect smartphones and tablets (iOS and Android) to a computer and then update, view, and test the same page on all of the devices at once. This type of testing environment is increasingly important as more and more people surf websites on mobile devices.

Edge Code is, as the name implies, designed for writing and editing code. It's still in Preview, which means it's not yet a fully released program. You can download it for free from www.adobe.com. Edge Code is a nice little code editor and shows promise, but it was notable that there seemed to be more people at Adobe MAX talking about the increasingly popular Brackets, the open source project that Adobe used as



Behance Pro allows you to customize your portfolio so you can create a unique design.

WHAT ABOUT ALL OF THOSE EDGE TOOLS?

Despite the common name, the collection of programs named Adobe Edge don't all work together, and none of them are well-suited to creating a website from start to finish, but they can provide some specialized assistance when you need it.

Amid this new crop of tools, Edge Animate is the most mature program and the one I find most exciting. You can use Edge Animate to create interactive HTML5 animations, complete with CSS and JavaScript (and you don't have to write any code yourself).

The heart of the program is a Timeline that takes up the bottom third of the interface. If you've used Adobe Flash, you'll have an advantage with Edge, although the two programs are quite different in many respects. Animate is ideal for creating interactive features that can then be exported

VANGUARD

Meet Vanguard Professional Lizzy Gadd.

She photographs people in the midst of Mother Nature, where serene portraiture mingles with vast landscape. Lizzy relies on the UP-Rise II backpack for its protection and comfort and on the Alta Pro tripod for its stability and flexibility. Ask Lizzy and she will tell you: the UP-Rise II and Alta Pro are the perfect companions for her every photo expedition.

© Whitney Justesen

Alta Pro Tripods / Up-Rise II Bags

available from these

VANGUARD AUTHORIZED DEALERS

TALLS CAMERA tallscamera.com

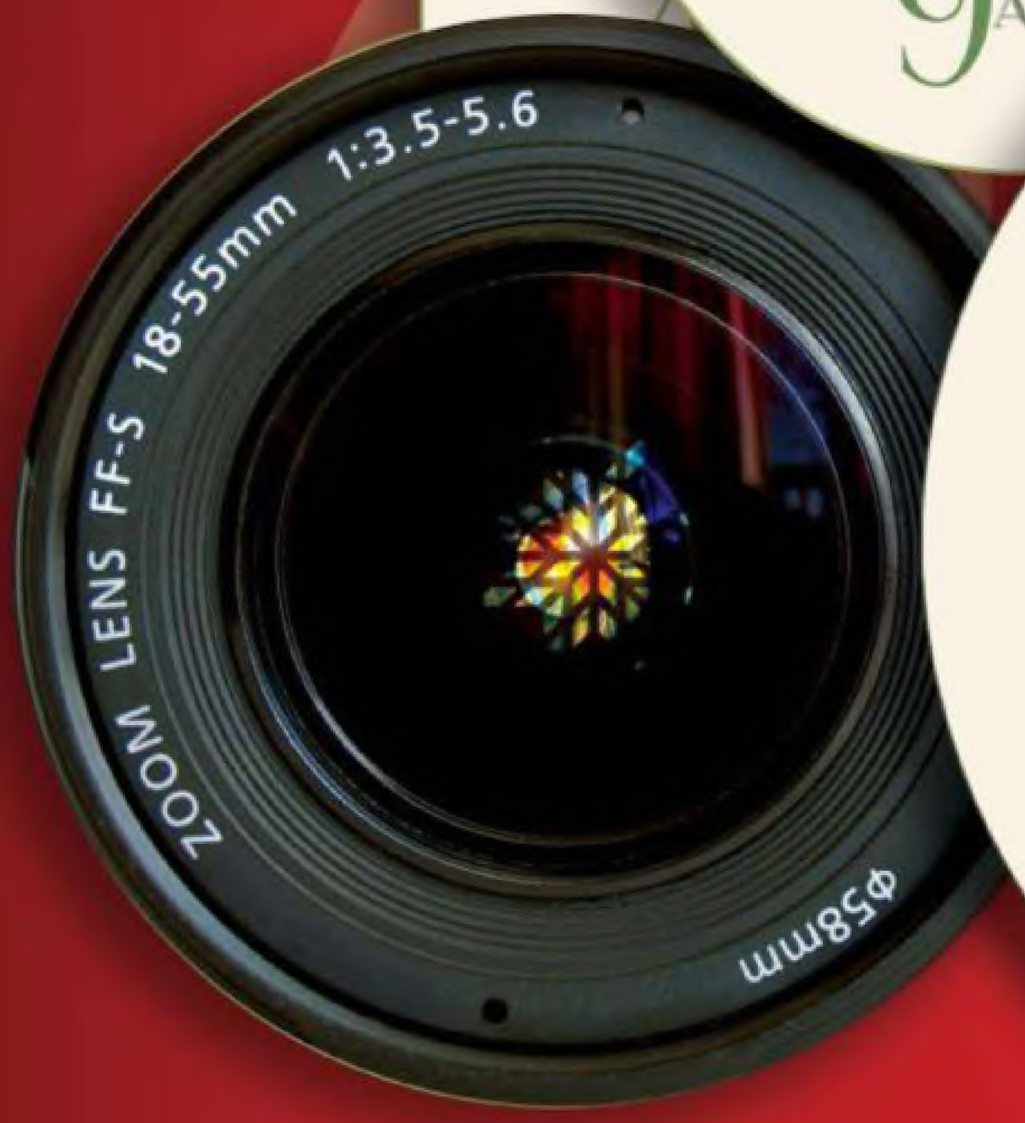
Hunt's huntsphotoandvideo.com

The Camera Shop lansingcamera.com

B&H bhphotovideo.com

ADORAMA adorama.com

Scott Kelby's 9th Annual Gonzo Holiday Gear Guide



Welcome to my "9th Annual Gonzo Holiday Gear Guide" (yes, last year I brought the "Gonzo" back after a brief break because just calling it a "Holiday Gear Guide" lacked that certain, I dunno, "gonzoness.") So, I now bring you my "Gonzo Holiday Gear Guide" whose light burns brighter than a thousand suns (insert dramatic pause here), featuring an unbridled collection of 100% absolutely necessary gear that there's no way we can see clear to live another minute of our hopeless, desperate lives without. (I gotta tell ya, you have to search far and wide to find any holiday gear guide that uses the terms "hopeless" and "desperate" in the opening paragraph, which is more irrefutable proof that this guide truly stands alone.)

Before we get to the list, remember that the holidays aren't about which gifts you get. They're about how many gifts you get, and the person who dies with the most gifts wins. (By the way, you can now add "dies" to "hopeless" and "desperate," making this the most riveting of all gear guides ever!) Also, to make things easy, we put up a webpage (www.scottkelby.com/14gear) with direct links to all the products I picked so you don't have to wonder if you're getting the exact right one. Okay, folks, watch your Geschwindigkeitsbegrenzung, because here we go!

The Rules

These are my self-imposed guidelines for which products make it into the guide. It's just two rules actually. First, to be listed here they have to be products that I use myself, and that I absolutely love, and now can't live without (well, I could live without them, but I wouldn't want to). Second, if a product makes the guide, it has to be one I would recommend to a close friend without hesitation, especially if my friend is a personal injury attorney (kidding).

Gear Guide Categories

In sacred Gonzo tradition, I'm breaking things into three distinct categories:

Stocking Stuffers: You can also use these as actual holiday gifts if you're not that crazy about the person.

Great Value Gear: Stuff that's a really good deal for not a lot of money, but he or she will totally dig it.

Cha-ching!: Stuff you buy for the doctor/petroleum engineer/rap mogul on your holiday gift list. This is the stuff that makes them burst into spontaneous tears of joy. Well, at least I would.

Stocking Stuffers

Remote Shutter Release (Wireless or Wired)

This is one of those gifts that every photographer at one time or another will need, but it's one of the last things we think to buy, which is what makes it such a great gift. You'll need to know the make and model of his camera so you get the right type of connector. Prices start at

www.bhphotovideo.com
Price: Starting at around $18

www.freestylephoto.biz Price: Starting at around $8.99

Spare Battery

I love this stocking stuffer because even if he has a spare battery, he would still love another one. It's one of those can't-go-wrong stocking stuffers. They're usually fairly inexpensive (from around $40–60), unless of course, he has a high-end camera like a Canon EOS-1Dx ($165) or a Nikon D4s ($149), in which case this gift may test the limits of your friendship. Just sayin'.

www.bhphotovideo.com Price: Starting at around $40

Collapsible Rubber Lens Hood

This is a really great stocking stuffer because your photographer will love it. They're awesome because they

lens uses a 77mm size lens hood, which is still only $10.95 at

www.bhphotovideo.com Price: Starting at $4.95

Some Cool Books

ing at $9.99

www.amazon.com Price: Start

Great Value Gear

Macphun Tonality Pro

The king of black-and-white conversion plug-ins had always been Nik Software's Silver Efex Pro (now part of the Nik Collection by Google), and it's still a great plug-in, but there may be a new king in town. Macphun has created a killer black-and-white conversion tool at less than half of the price of buying the Nik Collection. The Pro version is $69.99 and it totally kicks butt! If your photographer is into black and white, this will become her new tool of choice. (The only caveat is that it's Mac only, so make sure she uses a Mac first.)

http://macphun.com Price: $69.99

Think Tank Photo Airport Roller Derby

It's a four dual-wheel roller camera bag that she will absolutely go bonkers over! It holds a ton of gear, and it glides through the airport like it's on rails. Lots of room for lots of gear, and a very well-thought-out bag all the way around (plus, it fits in the overhead bin with no problem). However, fabulous eight-wheeled bags don't come cheap: it's around $390. Give it to someone you love, or someone you want to love you who doesn't yet, but will after you give her this.

www.thinktankphoto.com Price: $389.75

MagMod Modular Flash Modifiers

There are a lot of great flash modifiers out there, and MagMod is a new player in this market, but I gotta tell ya, their magnetic system of flash modifiers is so incredibly easy to use that you'll be a hero when the photographer on your list uses this system for the first time. The MagMod Basic Kit is $89, which comes with the MagGrip, MagGrid, and MagGel (magnetic—it just pops on and off) but then you (or he) can buy accessories fairly inexpensively like $19 for the Creative Gel Set or $25 for the MagGel 2 Slot Kit. Cool stuff!

http://magnetmod.com Price: Starting at $89

BlackRapid CURVE (RS-7) Strap

I learned about this strap about four years ago on one of my photo walks and I've been using one ever since. The strap wraps across the body (great for safety since a thief can't just grab it off your shoulder and take off), and the camera hangs upside-down at the side ready to slide up the strap and shoot at anytime. Really can't say enough about 'em. Around $62 at B&H. Totally worth it.

www.blackrapid.com Price: $61.95

Cactus Wireless Flash Transceiver V5

hese are so inexpensive it probably should have been listed under ocking stuffers, but don't let the low price fool you—these puppies ork amazingly well. They're used for firing your flash or strobes irelessly and they do a great job of it, even if they're not the prettiest ireless units out there. A set of two is around $75 (and yes, he'll need wo—one goes on top of his camera in the hot-shoe mount, the other ttaches to the flash itself).

ww.cactus-image.com Price: $74.95 for two

SmugMug Portfolio

It's never been more important to have an online portfolio, and SmugMug's gorgeous, newly designed templates have taken the world by storm. If the photographer on your holiday list doesn't have an online portfolio yet (or if she does and she has dreamed of selling her work online), this is the ticket. Their Basic plan is just $40 for a year—so get her a year plan. She'll love you for it!

www.smugmug.comm Price: Starting at $40/year

3 Legged Thing Punks – VVV Magnesium Alloy Tripod & Airhed

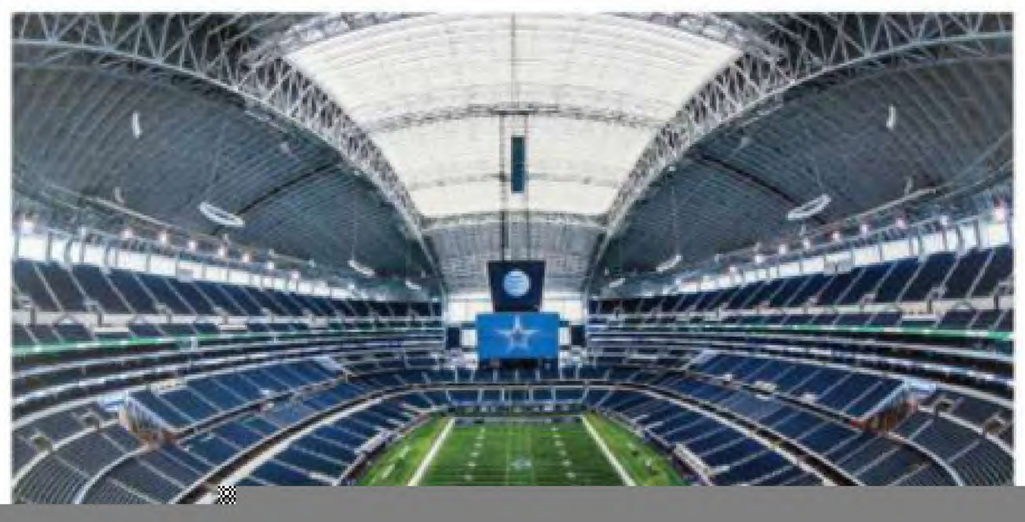
I started using one of these British tripods this year and I really love it, and the photographer on your gift list would totally love one, too! It makes an awesome travel tripod and it comes with a ballhead. It has reversible legs so it folds up really small, and it's super lightweight, but amazingly sturdy. B&H carries it for $199. You'll get lots of love in return.

www.3leggedthing.com Price: $199

Battery Grip

This is one of those gifts that he will love you for forever because it's so handy, and it will make his camera look and feel more like a high-end pro camera. It also gives him a second battery holder and a shutter button for when he's shooting vertical. They start at around $50 for a third-party grip, but if you buy a Nikon or Canon brand, expect to pay at least two to three times as much, so give the Vello brand at B&H a serious look. You'll be a holiday hero for this one!

www.bhphotovideo.com Price: Starting at $49.95



MPIX Modern Metal Print

Want to really make a photographer lose her mind? Gift her one of her own images printed on metal—it's like seeing her image in HD for the first time. Just remarkable! (By the way, this isn't metallic paper; this is printing on actual metal.) MPIX rocks at these metal prints and you

B&H Gift Card

Not sure exactly what to get him? Yes you do. Get him a B&H Gift Card. I don't know anyone who doesn't want something from the greatest photo store on earth, plus this way he can get whatever he wants (within the limit of how much you put on the card, of course). You can order them directly from the B&H site. They send a card and a catalog so it looks pretty substantial.

www.bhphotovideo.com Price: Starting at $20

Westcott Zeppelin

While this isn't nearly the most expensive gift in this gear guide, it's the biggest, so it may have the most physical impact. It's quite properly named because this mammoth softbox will give you maximum impact as it slowly casts a shadow over the studio space. Okay, I may be overdramatizing the size, but not the impact. Through a clever design, this new softbox allows you to focus and shape the beautiful light by sliding the actual strobe inside the softbox. She will love you for it. Westcott Zeppelin lights cost $399.90 for the 35" model; $499.90 for the 47" model; and $699.90 for the 59" model, which looks like it's the actual size of the Goodyear Blimp when you see it live.

www.fjwestcott.com Price: Starting at $399.90

Lightroom + Photoshop CC Photography Bundle

For around $120, you can get her a one-year subscription to Adobe's Creative Cloud Photography Bundle where she'll get the latest versions of both Photoshop and Lightroom, plus Lightroom mobile (for iOS), as well as some other goodies. Love will rain down upon you for this gift!

https://creative.adobe.com/plans/photography Price: $119.88

Profoto B1 500 AirTTL

Every photographer who shoots studio strobes on location dreams of two things: working on location without hauling around a battery pack, and shooting Profoto gear. The new Profoto B1 500 AirTTL fills both dreams at once because the battery is built into the sleek body (so no hauling a separate battery pack around). Profoto is the cream of the crop for performance, and they're gear is built like a tank (which is why most rental houses offer Profoto as their main line). But the price of the B1 500 AirTTL isn't for just anyone at $1,995—definitely for pros or for the Wall Street insider on your holiday gift list.

http://profoto.com

Price: $1,995

Cha-Ching!

Synology NAS (Network Attached Storage) Backup

This is a very important and powerful gift because this will house your holiday photographer's entire photo collection in a safe, rock-solid storage system (the same one I use myself), plus it will give her access to her images no matter where she is (via the Web). I've been looking for a kick-butt backup and archive system for years, and this is the one! A totally mind-blowing gift. Use their NAS Selector to find out which one is right for the photographer on your list. This may be one gift where you tell them up front, "I'm getting you a Synology NAS," so you get the right one for her needs (and the outpouring of unconditional love may start before the actual holiday does).

www.synology.com

Price: Starting at around $380

Canon EOS 7D Mark II

I know I've been something of a cheerleader for this camera since Canon announced it in late September, but it's because I think Canon did something really special with this camera aimed at sports and wildlife shooters. They put pro specs into an affordable camera body, so you no longer need to have NFL-sideline-quality gear just to get great photos of your kids' high school sporting events. With 10 frames per second, a 20.2-megapixel sensor, and much improved high-ISO noise performance over the older 7D that it replaces, I think it's an amazing camera at a brilliant price. He will follow you around like a puppy for the rest of his life if you buy him this.

www.usa.canon.com

Price: $1,799

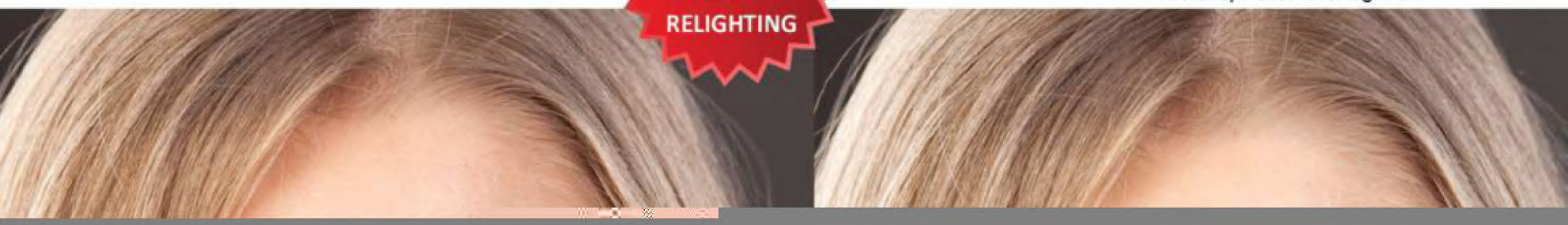
Tamron 28–300mm f/3.5–f/6.3 Di VC PZD (for Full-Frame DSLRs)

PortraitPro

New v12 out now with FACE RELIGHTING

"Fantastic tool for quick, quality retouching. Portrait Pro Studio 12 is powerful retouching software at a very reasonable price."

Photoshop User Jul/Aug 2014



PHOTOSHOP & HARDWARE: SELECTING THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

by RC Concepcion

As photographers, we want to invest in the gear that will give us the best images possible. From cam

those images and store and process them on a computer.

tally get us closer to reaching our photographic potential. Once the captures are complete, we take all of those images and store and process them on a computer. What we don't often see is that the computer can be the most important piece of the puzzle.

This is usually the time of year that everyone starts considering a refresh of their computers, so I thought it would be a good time to let you know what kinds of things I consider when purchasing a new Photoshop machine. This will not be an extensive technical dive into technology, but more of an anecdotal brushstroke of the things I consider and use. If it can work for me with the amount of Photoshop and video work I do, then it could be a good start for you.

WHICH IS BETTER, MAC OR PC?

arguments out there. Writing about it will almost certainly gener-
C got this all wrong!" I think this is one of the most fundamental
asing a computer—and this answer is largely shrouded in hype.
een PCs and Macs, aside from the operating system. The apps run
you might find using a Mac is better as all the devices will be in the
t back to operating system preference. There's no other difference.
PCs and Macs, so I know either of them can do the job. (If you
heart.)

The Mac vs. PC argument is one of the most polarizing
ate some letters to the editor saying, "How dare you? R
questions that should be answered by *you* when purcha

These days, there are no discernable differences betw
exactly the same. If you use an iPhone, iPad, or AppleTV,
same ecosystem. If this isn't a concern, then you're righ

To help as many people as possible, I work on both
were to ask me my preference, though, I'm a PC guy at

LAPTOP OR DESKTOP?

whether you'll want
at desktop systems
portability. I've been
ng multilayered files.
a significant hiccup

lution files, such as
ing in a desktop sys-
red with a great dis-
grade the display as
ended system specs
nents for Photoshop
ments.html.

Once you've selected your operating system, you need to focus on
to use a laptop or a desktop for processing. History dictated th
were usually better for processing large files. The downside was
shooting with cameras in the 12–36 megapixel range and makin
and the laptops I've been using (see "My Computers") haven't had
with any file I've thrown at it.

If you get into pro video production, working with higher resc
panoramas; or working with 3D, you would be best served invest
tem. For photographers, I would argue for a mobile machine pai
play. This gives you the best in power and mobility, and lets you up
needed. You should also always check the minimum and recomm
for the applications that you want to run. For the official requirem
CC 2014, visit http://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/system-require

MY COMPUTERS

These are the laptops that I'm currently using:

- MacBook Pro with Retina display
- Razer Blade 14" touchscreen
- Samsung NP700Z5C - S02US
- Toshiba Satellite P50T Ultra HD 4K touchscreen laptop

THE PROCESSOR: THE BRAINS OF THE MACHINE

One of the most important parts of the computer is the processor chip that runs the machine. This is the brain that will handle all of the tasks in Photoshop, encode videos, and be responsible for a lot of the heavy lifting of the files you throw at it.

I'm a big fan of the new Intel Core i7 Processors. These chips are based on a quad-core architecture. Think of each of the cores as a little brain. The more cores you have, the faster the work can be tackled. Recently, Intel refreshed their chips to the 4th Generation Core i7, offering even faster processing across those four cores. With features such as Hyper-Threading, which allows each core to work on two tasks at the same time, this means more power.

While overall processing power is important, it's the electrical power consumption where you'll see the dividends pay off. Previously, most PCs were rather large and carried extremely large power supplies. This made them hard to transport, and they would get incredibly hot. I could only work for a short amount of time—maybe two hours max. The 4th Generation Core i7s are really good at handling power and battery life. Most laptop power supplies are now a lot smaller and not as unwieldy.

I was using a Samsung laptop with the new Intel processors on a recent trip. I started working on files on a plane from Tampa to Atlanta—about an hour trip. On my next flight from Atlanta to Los Angeles, I was pushing multiple files through Photoshop. When it was time to turn off the laptop for descent, about 3 1/2 hours in, I still had about 20% of battery left. (For the latest Samsung laptop, check out the the ATIV Book 9 at http://bit.ly/1t8Yv2q.)

Real processing punch, great power management and battery life, and small power supplies are invaluable in your Photoshop machine, in your home or on the go, so invest in a machine with the new 4th Generation Core i7 Processor. You'll be glad you did.

RAM: 8 GB OR MORE

The next major component to consider for your computer is the amount of RAM that you'll need. While the brains of the computer usually help with processing your files, it's RAM that manages all the applications running on your machine. The more RAM you can put into a machine, the better. I've been able to successfully run a majority of my Photoshop tasks on 8 GB of RAM, but I like to upgrade to 16 GB of RAM whenever possible. This will help me a lot as I work with Photoshop and video.

There are different types of RAM speeds available. I find that more often than not the RAM speed doesn't make that much of a noticeable difference in Photoshop work. Keep the RAM speed low if you have the option and save yourself the extra money.

HARD DRIVE SPEED & SSD DRIVES

When you shoot images, you're going to need to store them. It's obvious that the more speed you have on your machine, the better; however, you'll also notice a performance boost the faster that information gets in and out of the machine. For that, you'll need to address the hard drive speed.

Hard drives are physical disks that sit in your machine. These platters are read by a needle. The faster the platter spins, the faster the computer can read the data. This is usually measured in revolutions per minute (RPMs).

Generally, you'll find two speeds in hard drives: 5400 RPM and 7200 RPM. I recommend the faster of the two drives whenever possible. In fact, I would get a smaller, faster drive vs. a larger, slower drive. Most of my images live in external drives, so I can live with the smaller drives. On a desktop computer, it's much easier to find large hard drives in the 7200-RPM range.

What about SSD?

Solid-state drives (SSD) are coming into their own. If you have an iPhone, iPad, or tablet, you're already using this technology. Rather than a spinning platter and a needle to read the data, data sits on an integrated circuit. There are no moving parts, so battery consumption is usually better, and reading the data is generally faster. This is usually the best option on a fast-running computer (standard on a MacBook Pro with Retina display), but they tend to get a little pricey.

Use a Scratch Disk

This may only apply to desktop systems or really expensive laptops, but it definitely bears mentioning. If you're manipulating really large files, then get a computer that has multiple hard drives onboard. Having a second hard drive will let you assign a drive as a scratch disk. When Photoshop uses all the available RAM on your computer, it will temporarily switch to using a hard drive as virtual memory, commonly known as swap space. Having a dedicated drive for the swap space can make a difference in how well your computer runs.

VIDEO MEMORY

Photoshop is a resource-intensive program, but unless you're doing a lot of 3D work, a good video card with about 1 GB of RAM will be more than adequate. Most recent chips have an onboard graphics processing unit (GPU), and that could be suitable. To use all of the GPU-enabled features in Photoshop, opt for a computer that has a separate video card built in (you'll hear this referred to as a discrete video card). If you want to refer to a listing of GPU features for Photoshop, as well as some troubleshooting tips, visit http://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/kb/photoshop-cs6-gpu-faq1.html.

COMPUTER INPUTS

When working in Photoshop, you'll often need to attach different peripherals to your machine, such as a Wacom Intuos tablet, card readers, and external hard drives. So you want to make sure you have plenty of fast ports available. On the USB side, make sure all of your ports are USB 3, and that they are plentiful. To run an external monitor, you should have one or two HDMI ports. Some laptops incorporate a DisplayPort or Mini DisplayPort. HDMI and DisplayPort are options to connect to bigger external monitors, which is a big plus.

THE COMPUTER DISPLAY

If there are places where you compromise on building a computer, the display should not be one of them. When you look at your images, you want to see them reproduced faithfully in terms of color. To do this, invest in a monitor that has a wide color gamut, has minimal (if no) shifting of color when looked at from different angles, has a high contrast ratio, and has a good amount of connectivity options to attach all of your devices. Recent advances in monitor technology pack a high amount of pixels per inch (ppi) on the screen, offering extremely sharp detail. You'll hear these referred to as a Retina display on the Mac, as well as a High-DPI display. Anything more than a pixel density of 220 ppi will be considered extremely detailed and very desirable.

I was impressed with the display options on three of my laptops: the Toshiba Satellite P50T, the Razer Blade 14", and the 15" MacBook Pro with Retina display. The Razer Blade 14" uses an IGZO (indium gallium zinc oxide, a technology that gives you sharp images and is power friendly) monitor that has a high contrast ratio, wide viewing angles, and great color accuracy. The pixel density on this 14" monitor is a stunning 262 ppi. The Toshiba Satellite P50T is one of the first laptops out there with a 4K screen and is Technicolor Color Certified. The calibration process that they've used is the same that's used in motion pictures, so the color accuracy has been impressive. Its pixel density? A whopping 282 ppi. The MacBook Pro with Retina display uses a different technology for its screens (in-plane switching, or IPS), and produces great blacks and great color, and packs a pixel density of 220 ppi.

Toshiba Satellite P50T

Razer Blade 14"

15" MacBook Pro with Retina display

While I love the color on the laptops, I rely on larger external monitors so I can get right into my work. At the office, I was asked to review some Samsung monitors from their 850 Series, as well as their newly announced S32D850T monitor. This 32" display is four times the resolution of a standard HD monitor, with a resolution of 2560x1440—known as Wide Quad High Definition (WQHD). The monitor has a great viewing angle, great color accuracy, and gives me an incredible amount of real estate to work on with my images in Photoshop. I loved the monitor so much, I bought it and replaced the Apple Display that I had in the office. There's nothing wrong with the Apple Display—it has great color—I just think that the color is as good, if not a tinge better. It offers four USB 3 ports, something the Apple monitor doesn't, and is $300 less.

While I love that monitor, their U32D970Q - 32" 970 Series UHD Professional LED Monitor is jaw dropping. With a resolution of 3840x2160, this monitor is four times the resolution of standard 1920x1080 FHD monitors. It not only offers 100% sRGB color compliance, but also 99.5% Adobe RGB, as well as 11 color space calibration options. It took me a little while to get used to seeing things at that resolution, but I quickly forgave it due to how faithful the images look onscreen.

Full disclosure: I only spent about a week working with this monitor and had to send it back to them. That hurt. A lot. With a price tag of $1,999, it's not for the casual user. I will get that monitor—one day.

There you have it, a somewhat untechnical, anecdotal review of the things I consider when choosing a Photoshop machine. If you want to see more information on the machines and displays mentioned in this article, check out the links below. And if you're a KelbyOne member, don't forget to check out http://kelbyone.com/discounts because we often have great discounts on hardware and computers. If you have any questions, please feel free to find me on twitter at http://twitter.com/aboutrc. ■

RC CONCEPCION

"Samsung's U32D970Q - 32" 970 Series UHD Professional LED Monitor is jaw dropping. With a resolution of 3840x2160, this monitor is four times the resolution of standard 1920x1080 FHD monitors."

RESOURCES

- 4th Generation Intel Core i7 Processors: www.intel.com/content/www/us/en/processors/core/core-i7-processor.html
- MacBook Pro with Retina display: www.apple.com/macbook-pro
- Razer Blade: www.razerzone.com/gaming-systems/razer-blade
- Samsung 850 Series: www.samsung.com/us/search/espsearch.us?keyword=850+series
- Samsung U32D970Q - 32" 970 Series UHD Professional LED Monitor: www.samsung.com/us/computer/monitors/LU32D97KQSR/ZA
- Samsung S32D850T - Samsung WQHD 32" LED Monitor: www.samsung.com/us/computer/monitors/LS32D85KTSR/ZA
- Toshiba Satellite P50T Ultra HD 4K: www.toshiba.com/us/p50t

Beginners' Workshop

LESA SNIDER

extreme contrast

A Threshold adjustment layer converts your image into an *extremely* high-contrast black-and-white image, all without harming your original. By pairing the end result with a bright and textured background, you can create a striking yet versatile silhouette effect that turns an ordinary image into a unique piece of art.

Step One: This technique works best if your subject is on a white or light-colored background, so photographers could shoot with this technique in mind. Open a photo and duplicate the image layer by pressing Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J). If your image consists of multiple layers (as in this example), create a stamped copy by activating the topmost layer and pressing Shift-Option-Command-E (PC: Shift-Alt-Ctrl-E). Make sure the resulting new layer, which you might double-click and rename "details," is positioned at the top of your Layers panel.

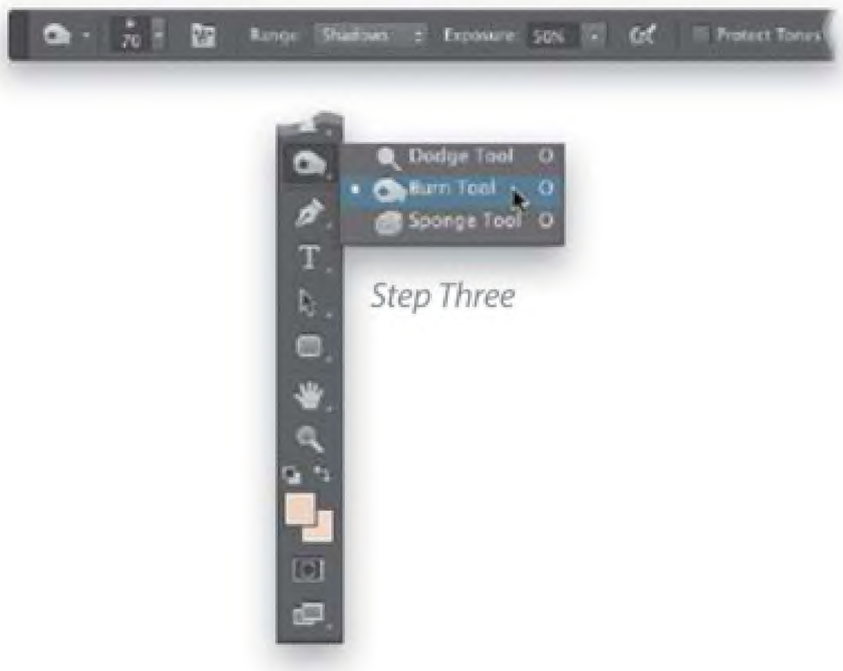
©Studio Kwadrat/Fotolia

Step One

Step Two: Choose Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Threshold (or click the half-black, half-white circle at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Threshold). Either way, Photoshop adds the layer and turns your image's highlights white and the shadows black. To increase the volume of highlights, drag the Properties panel's Threshold slider leftward; to increase shadows, drag rightward. Your goal is to achieve a nice level of detail while ensuring viewers can still tell what it's a photo of. If some details disappear due to a lack of shadows, don't panic; you'll fix them momentarily.

Step Two

Step Three: In the Layers panel, activate the details layer you created in Step One and, in the Toolbox, activate the Burn tool (nested under the Dodge tool [O]). In the Options Bar, set the Range drop-down menu to Shadows and the Exposure to 50%. Turn off Protect Tones.



Step Three

Step Four: Mouse over to your image and brush across any areas that need darkening, like this lady's hat; keep painting until the details reappear. With a Threshold adjustment layer already at the top of your layer stack, the darkening is immediately visible. If an area becomes too dark, switch to the Dodge tool and paint across those areas to lighten them.

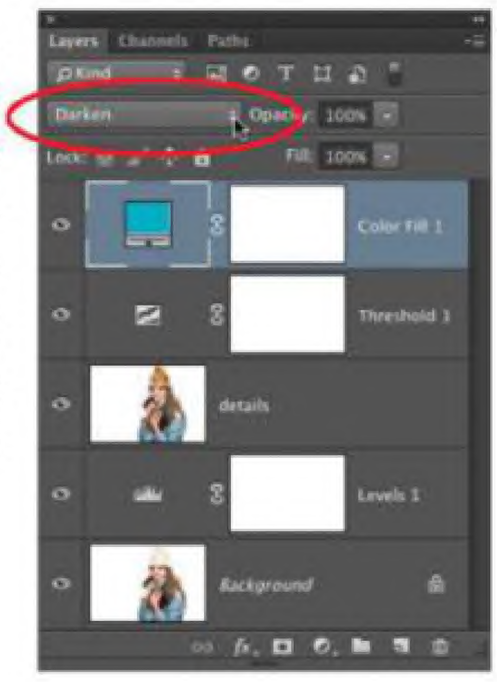
Tip: If the silhouette looks too sharp, soften it with a blur filter. Shift-click to activate both the detail and Threshold adjustment layers and, from the Layers panel flyout menu, choose Convert to Smart Object. Choose Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Enter a Radius value of 0.5 to 2 pixels (use a lower number for smaller images and a higher number for bigger ones), and click OK. Note that we didn't blur the image in our example.

Step Four

Step Five: With the top layer active in the Layers panel, click the half-black, half-white circle at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Solid Color. In the resulting Color Picker, pick a range of colors from the vertical bar and click within the large square at the left to tell Photoshop how light or how dark the color should be. Click OK and Photoshop adds the new layer to the top of your layer stack. *Tip:* To change the Color Fill layer's color later on, double-click its thumbnail to reopen the Color Picker.

Step Five

Step Six: In the Layers panel, change the Color Fill layer's blend mode to Darken to make the white background disappear. (Blend modes in this section of the drop-down menu tell Photoshop to look at the colors in your layers and keep the darkest ones.)



Step Seven: Choose File>Place (Embedded or Linked) and locate an image to use for texture (say, blurry snowflakes). Click Place and, if necessary, Shift-drag any resulting corner handle to resize the image, or drag within the bounding box to reposition it. Press Enter.

©Rvika/Fotolia

Step Seven

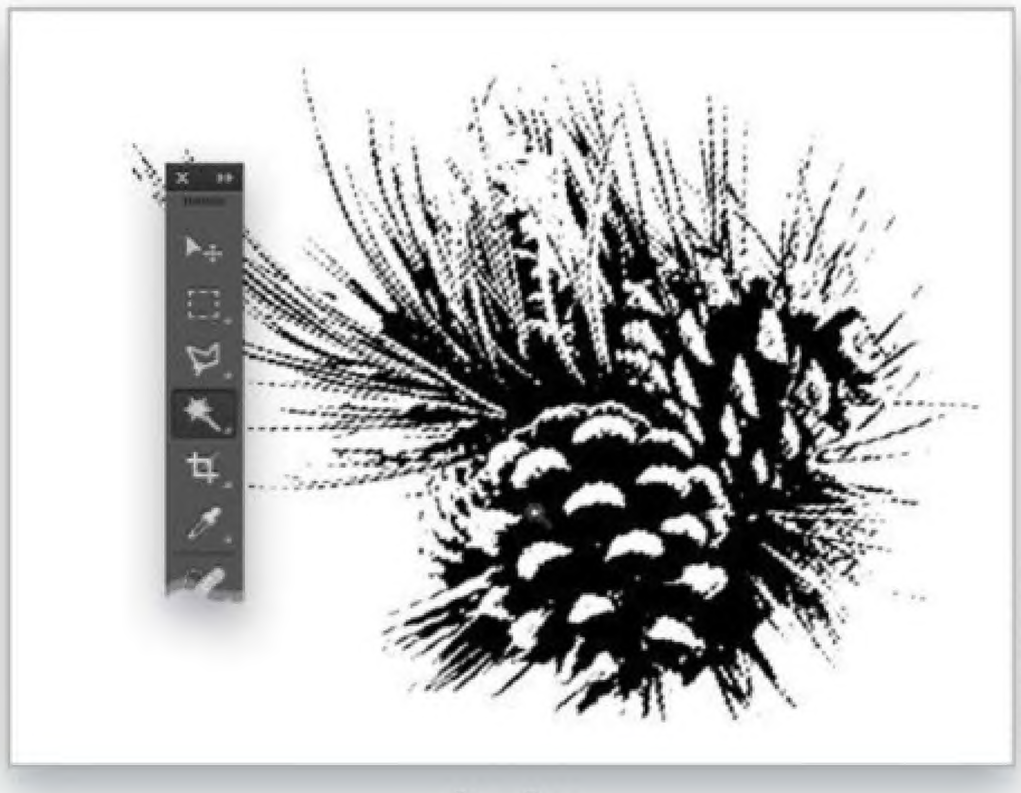
Step Eight: Change the texture layer's blend mode to Overlay and then rejoice at your creativity. Here's the finished product, along with the Layers panel.

Step Eight

Colorized Shape Cutout

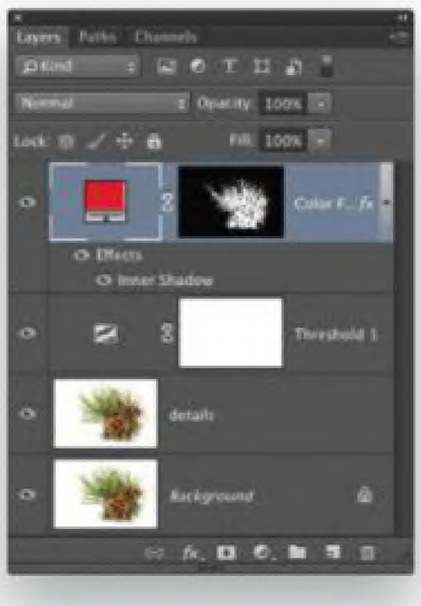
The exact same technique can also be used to create a nifty still-life cutout.

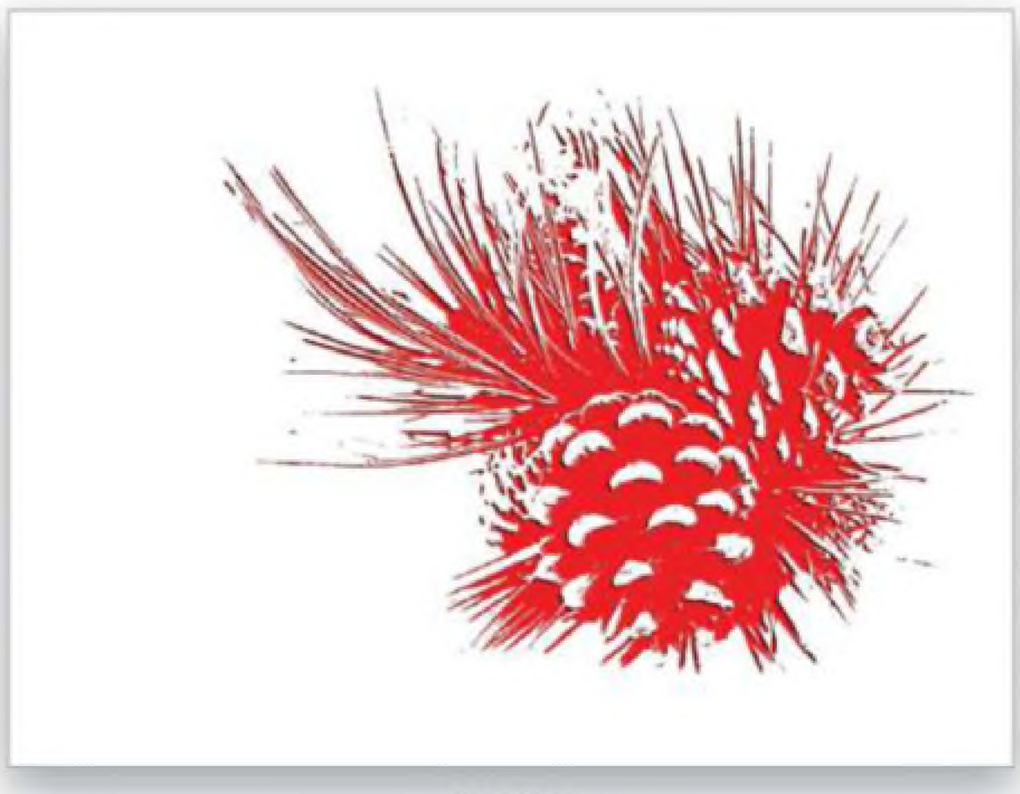
Step One: Follow Steps One through Four above and then activate the Magic Wand tool (nested under the Quick Selection tool [W] in the Toolbox). Mouse over to your image (pine cones, in our example) and click a black area to select it. Next, choose Select>Similar and Photoshop selects the remaining black areas.



Step One

Step Two: Add a new Solid Color fill layer as described in Step Five above, though this time pick red. Click OK to close the Color Picker. (Remember, you can change this color later by double-clicking the Color Fill layer's thumbnail.) As a finishing touch, click the *fx* icon at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Inner Shadow. In the resulting Layer Style dialog, adjust the settings if you'd like and then click OK. Here's the final Layers panel and result.





Step Two

As you can see, the effect is versatile and eye-catching. Be sure to choose File>Save As, and pick Photoshop from the Format drop-down menu to preserve your layers for future editing. Until next time, may the creative force be with you all. ■

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Layout Design: Taffy Clifford

Happy Holiday Photos

By Pete Collins

'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house, all the family was stirring, even the mouse. While the kids are preparing for the festive next day, your lighting practice will cause St. Nick to say, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good light!"

Step One: Start with the Room

Choose the room you want to use for your Christmas photos and start scouting out how you want to shoot them. Think about angles, backgrounds, and the space you have. Most of us want to show off the tree and any leg lamp that we may have won as a major prize. This is where a lot of folks will make the mistake of thinking that standing closer to the tree is going to look best. Truthfully, if your subjects stand next to the tree, they'll have to fight with the tree for attention. Our eyes get easily distracted, and the busy tree is a tempting target. This is supposed to be a family portrait, not a tree portrait, so avoid that temptation, and move away from the tree a bit so it will be a little blurry in the background (more about that later).

Typical setting for Christmas photos

Too close to tree

"What mannequin, honey?"

Arnaldo Arbonies

Step Two: Get Help

To make the most of your practice session, you'll need help. If you're like a lot of us, you've exhausted your family's patience for helping you when it comes to photography. As you can see in the previous image, you'll need to get creative and go to a craft store and buy a couple of mannequin heads to act as stand-ins for your family. For many of you, this will immediately cut down on the stress and help you focus on the task at hand instead of trying to wrangle kids or a bored spouse.

You could put the head on a light stand and add a shirt on a hanger, or you can just use a chair or anything that will hold the heads while you practice. Have fun and get fancy by adding a wig and some lines using paint or markers to give your camera something to focus on and help you determine if your image is sharp when you're checking it on the screen of your camera at 100%.

Yes, you'll have to explain to your family and neighbors what you're doing and why you've given your new best friend a name, but by now they already know that you're a little weird, and it may even get you out of spending time with your creepy uncle.

Step Three: Figure out the Look You Want for Your Photos

Moving your subject away from the tree will help the look of your images if you understand how using the lowest possible aperture setting will create a shallower depth of field, making the background blurry. Aperture, or f-stop, is the size of the opening that lets light in through the lens: the higher the number, the more area the camera captures in focus; the lower the number, the shallower the depth of field.

Take a look at the comparison below. Notice especially how the tree and lights look at the different settings. Most cameras will come with a lens that can go down to about f/5 or f/4.5, which helps cut down on the busy look of the tree and lamp better than a higher aperture setting such as f/14. Lenses with f-stop numbers such as f/2.8 or lower tend to be a lot more expensive, but allow you to really showcase the subject you're focusing on by blurring the background even more. If buying one of these lenses isn't in your budget and you can't convince your spouse to let you get one for Christmas, you might want to look into renting one for the holidays to give your shots a more professional look.

Step Four: Lighting Your Subject

The lights of the tree and any other artificial illumination around the room are beautiful and are most appreciated in a dim room. This is fine while hanging out with cousin Eddie, but not so good for your pictures, so you may want to try your hand at adding a flash to your photographic arsenal. There are a bunch of flashes out there and you may have a favorite brand with certain bells and whistles, but let's keep this simple. Even the cheapest manual flash can be a great asset if you know how to use it. We'll discuss adjusting the impact of the light in a minute, but first let's talk about a couple of ways to use the flash.

Aiming the flash right at your subject from the top of your camera is better than nothing, but it will leave them looking a bit stark, like a deer in headlights. Pointing your flash up will turn your ceiling into a giant source of light that's very soft and pleasing, but it may leave some dark shadows, especially under the hair and chin. This is a usable technique that can produce many wonderful images. Another version of this technique is to bounce the flash off a wall—the light, not the actual flash, because that would be sad. If you try this method, a great tip I learned from wedding photographer Joe Buissink is to bounce the flash off the wall in the direction the noses are pointing. Try it and you'll find that you can get some wonderful indirect light, but it takes practice to handle the changing scene as your family moves around.

One of the easiest and cheapest ways to create great light for a single subject or your whole family is to get a piece of white foamcore and figure out a way to mount it slightly above your camera flash at a 45° angle. Point the flash into the foamcore, and when it fires, the light will bounce off the board and turn it into a light source that's large and soft but also low enough to help fill in the shadows of the chin and hair. Simple but effective.

Foamcore bounce setup

Straight flash *Ceiling bounce* *Foamcore bounce*

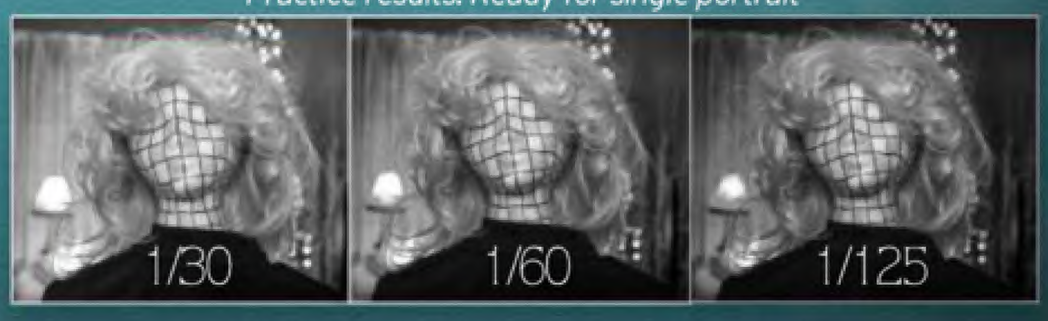
Compare flash results–notice harsh vs. soft

Step Five: Adjusting the Ambient Light

Once you've figured out where the subject will stand and how to bounce the light, you now have to adjust the look of the light on the subject and the ambient light for the rest of the image. We'll assume the flash is set for manual and will fire the same amount of light each time. For instance, you figure out that with an aperture of f/2.8, ISO of 400, and a shutter speed of 1/125 that your flash set at 1/4 power lights the subject really well, but the ambient light is too dark and doesn't let you see the tree and decorations very well.

Instead of messing with the flash and changing the look of the subject, simply change your shutter speed because it affects the look of the ambient light. Look at these comparison images. With the shutter speed being the only thing that changes, notice how it changes the look of the rest of the image while the subject stays lit the same way. Most folks get in trouble when they try to change too many settings at once. When practicing, only change one thing and see how it affects the image.

Practice results: Ready for single portrait



Shutter speed: slower=more ambient light

Groups=higher f-stop and more power

Step Six: Putting It Together

Now you have your scene set thanks to your model/stand-in, and you've figured out the aperture and shutter speed, and you've set up your flash and know what power to use. But before you call in your family, there's one more scenario to practice. More people means that the shallow depth of field you used on a single person may not work, and you may have to try a higher f-stop to make sure that all the eyes of your family are in focus.

This is why you bought a few mannequin heads and added the lines. Practice with multiple heads and figure out the best aperture for the group, and whether you'll need to increase the power of the flash. Usually, it may be a couple of stops of the aperture and maybe one more stop of light. (A "stop" is a term used to mean the next point in the scale; for instance, on the flash, going from 1/2 power to 1/4 power is called a stop.)

Now all that's left is to call your family in and use the same settings that you nailed down in practice to capture some great family photos. They won't believe how fast you're able to take their pictures and how great they look. You'll become a hero in their eyes, or at least it will validate your photography weirdness and maybe convince them to let you get that new lens.

Step Seven: One Is the Loneliest Number

This technique also works if you don't want to let anyone see what crazy thing you've set up for this year's holiday selfie. Set up the mannequin right where you want to stand, make it the same height as you, then get all the settings right. Now all it takes is setting the self-timer and a little patience to get your head in the right spot, and voilà! Super-selfie!

Christmas, families, and chaos seem to all go hand in hand. Add to that mix trying to figure out how to use a flash while taking family portraits and it almost guarantees to leave you with a less-than-happy experience. A little investment on the front end, and not being ashamed of playing with mannequins, can lead to a new understanding of how photography and lighting work and ultimately have your family singing your praises. ■

ALL IMAGES BY PETE COLLINS EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

Rescue the Details.

You don’t have to be a pro to get results like this.

This image was enhanced using the proprietary technology found in the Topaz plug-ins. Tools such as adaptive exposure, selective saturation and advanced masking extend beyond what can be found in Photoshop, saving time and most importantly producing extraordinary results.

See the steps taken to transform this image

topazlabs.com/psuser-lake

Under the Loupe

a jpeg for every occasion

BY ROB SYLVAN

The ubiquitous and often underrated JPEG is an incredibly versatile file format in your Lightroom output arsenal. Knowing all the ways that Lightroom can create JPEG versions of your photos is useful for keeping your workflow efficient and flexible.

As a file format, JPEGs often get a bad rap when compared to RAW photos, and even when put up against file formats like TIFF and PSD. I was in a camera store recently and I overheard a customer asking an employee if he should shoot RAW to get better images, to which the clerk replied that he should stick to shooting JPEG unless he knew how to process the RAW data better than the engineers who created his camera. I thought that was a fair point. RAW alone doesn't make a photo better, it just gives you more data to work with and lets you work with that data at a less baked-in phase of the image-processing pipeline. Clearly this is no small thing, and once you become proficient with any of the RAW processing software available, you can potentially achieve better results than the in-camera JPEG. The relatively smaller file size and out-of-the-camera finished results of a JPEG can sometimes trump the potential benefits of RAW capture, and there may be times when that matters most to your capture workflow.

When it comes to output, it's a whole different story, and this is where that wonderfully compressible and universally supported JPEG file stands head and shoulders above the rest in many applications. A JPEG is the perfect file format for sharing photos online, via our mobile devices, and even when sending out for prints. Every image viewer worth its salt can display a JPEG image and every printer can print one. For this reason Lightroom provides a JPEG output option in each of the output-focused modules, which includes Book, Slideshow, Print, and Web, as well as the Export dialog.

export dialog

Creating JPEGs via export is probably the most common situation we encounter. If you need a high-quality image with a relatively small file size that can be displayed in anything from a Web browser to an image-editing program, then JPEG is your go-to choice. Maybe you need to email photos to someone, upload a gallery to a photo-sharing site, burn a DVD for a client, or countless other purposes: JPEG usually just gets the job done efficiently and with ease.

The key to choosing JPEG on export is the File Settings panel of the Export dialog (File>Export). It's here that you choose JPEG via the Image Format drop-down menu, then set the Quality slider to your desired amount of compression. This compression is JPEG's greatest strength and greatest weakness. The higher the Quality setting, the lower the amount of compression applied to the exported copies, which results in a larger file size (in bytes) with little or no compression artifacts. The lower the Quality setting, the higher the amount of compression applied to the exported copies, which results in a smaller file size with greater potential for visible compression artifacts. You can't make a photo better, just first place.

As a rule, the Quality slider set in the neighborhood of 80–90 will produce a reasonable amount of file compression (smaller file size) with little or no visible compression artifacts, and is a good choice when image appearance matters more than file size. If file size matters more than image appearance, you can try the Quality slider in the 60–80 range and check your results in a program like Photoshop to decide if you can live with the results for your given purpose for exporting.

If file size in bytes really matters and you still want high quality, then the other factor to consider is a photo's pixel dimensions. The larger the pixel dimensions of an image, the more pixels it contains, and hence the more data there is in the photo. For example, if during export (using the Image Sizing panel) I resize a photo that's 6000x4000 pixels to 3000x2000 pixels, I can keep the Quality slider at 80 and create a JPEG copy with a smaller file size in bytes than if I didn't resize and set the Quality slider to 60. Using the Quality slider in conjunction with resizing the photo to the exact pixel dimensions you need (and no larger) is the most powerful way to reduce file size in bytes. Modern DSLRs produce photos with such large pixel dimensions you can usually get away with resizing exported copies smaller for most purposes. In the end, your reasons for exporting will drive the settings you make.

Note: The Limit File Size To option in the File Settings panel only uses increasing amounts of compression to attain the configured file size in kilobytes, and as a result may be unable to achieve the desired file size unless you also resize the pixel

dimensions smaller, too. This option is probably best reserved only for instances where you're already resizing photos to very small pixel dimensions and you don't really care about the amount of JPEG compression being applied.

book module

The most common output of the Book module is uploading the finished book to Blurb to have it printed, but if needed you can also export the pages of your book as individual JPEG files, too. After you've created your Blurb book and clicked the Create Saved Book button to preserve your settings in a special collection, click the Book drop-down menu in the Book Settings panel and choose JPEG. You'll see that the Book Settings panel

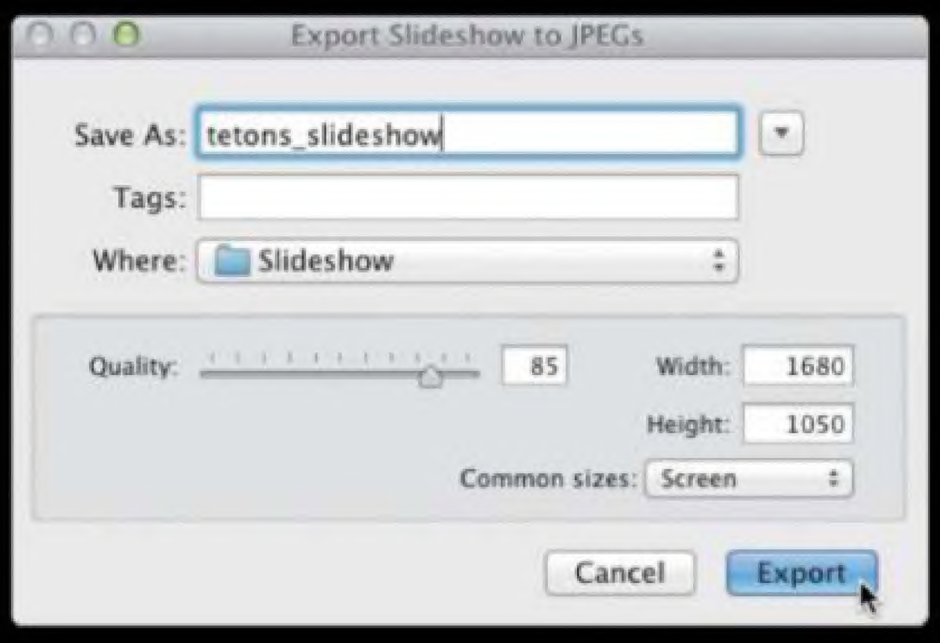
has the same JPEG-related output controls for Quality, Color Profile, output Sharpening, and File Resolution as the Export dialog. The settings you choose will be determined by your purpose for creating the JPEGs.

Click the Export Book to JPEG button at the bottom of the right-side panels to open the Save dialog. Click the Save button to start the process of saving out the JPEG files. The front and back cover will be saved as a single image, as will each individual page layout. Two-page spreads will be saved as a single image.

slideshow module

The Slideshow module isn't sophisticated, but to its credit it is easy to use for creating layouts of your photos for presentations. If you need slide show features that Lightroom lacks (different fade options, multiple music tracks, per-slide timing, etc.), then you might consider simply creating the layouts in Lightroom and then exporting the slides as individual JPEG images that can be imported into a more robust slide show program.

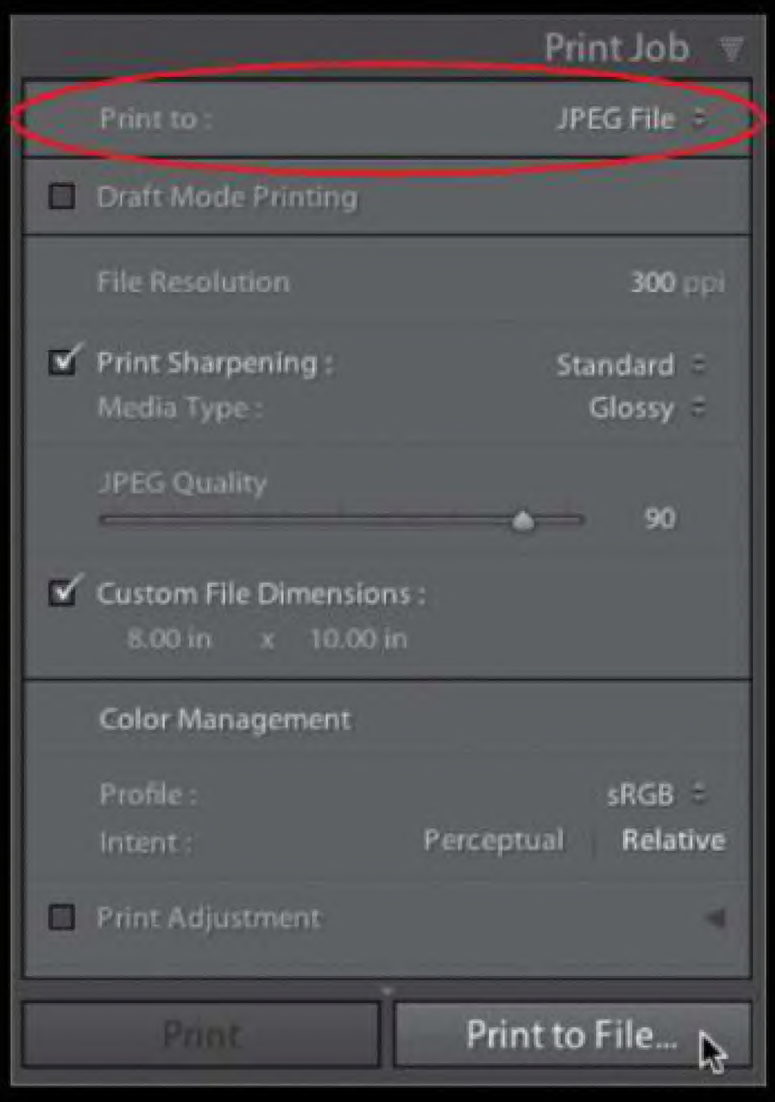
Once you've created your slide layouts, go to Slideshow> Export JPEG Slideshow to open the Export Slideshow to JPEGs dialog. Here you can choose the pixel dimensions of the individual slides and set the Quality slider to determine how much JPEG compression is applied to each image. Typically, in this scenario you're less worried about file size and more worried about how the image looks. Click the Export button to complete the process.



print module

Creating JPEGs from the Print Job panel in the Print module generally has one specific purpose, which is when you want to save out a finished print layout as a single JPEG image to upload to an online print service. I stress the phrase "print layout" because if you just want to output a bunch of borderless 5x7s (or any other print size), then it's a lot faster to simply use the Export dialog (after cropping the selected photos to the proper aspect ratio) to save out the JPEGs at the proper size for printing. A print layout is when you have multiple photos on one canvas or a single photo with a border, or anything that goes beyond the simple borderless single image print.

To create a JPEG from the Print module you need to set the Print To drop-down menu in the Print Job panel to JPEG File. You can then check the Custom File Dimensions box and enter the size of the print you want to make (this way you are no longer limited to only sizes supported by your printer driver).



With your canvas set to the desired size, you can create your print layout to suit your needs, and when you're ready for output you'll find the same key settings as are available in the Export dialog, namely the Quality slider, Print Sharpening, and Color Management. The same general rule applies for the JPEG Quality slider here as in the Export dialog. Print Sharpening is entirely optional, but if you use it, make sure you choose the correct Media Type for the paper you've selected. If you're unsure of the correct color Profile for where you're sending your photos for printing, then be sure to ask the people making the prints. Usually, sRGB is the safest option, but asking is better. Click the Print to File button at the bottom to save each page of the layout as a separate JPEG file.

web module

As far as the Web module goes, unless you're creating a Flash gallery, the only option is an HTML gallery where all the images in the gallery are JPEGs by default. There isn't any way to export only the JPEG images from a Web gallery (that would be a job for the Export dialog), but the Export button found at the bottom of the right-side panels allows you to export the entire Web gallery (webpages, JPEG images, and associated code that makes it work) to a location of your choosing for easy upload to your website via FTP, if you're unable to upload directly from the Web module itself using the Upload button. The key setting that relates to JPEG image quality in a Web gallery is the Quality slider in the Output Settings panel. This works the same way as it does in the Export dialog. ■

ALL IMAGES BY ROB SYLVAN

westcott

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Maximum Workflow

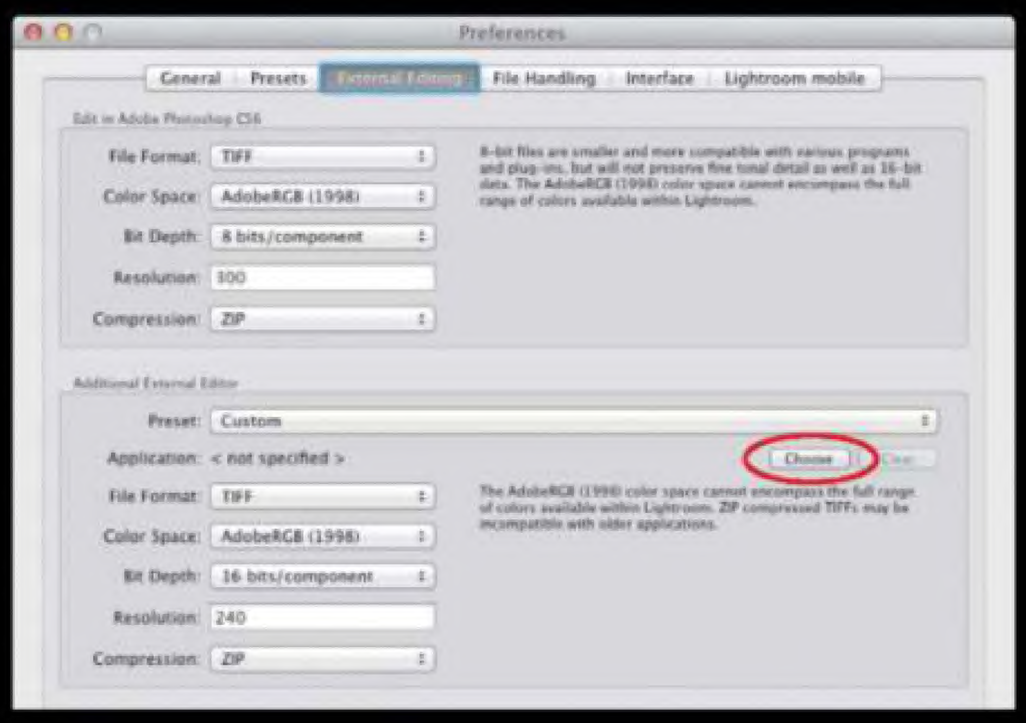
portraitpro 12

BY SEAN McCORMACK

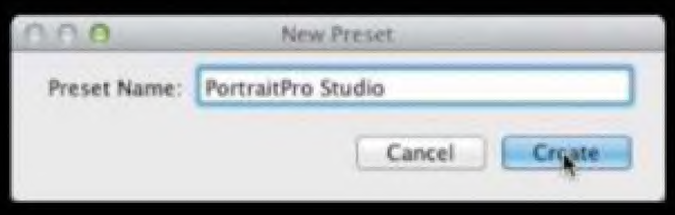
As a retouching tool, you can do a surprising amount of work in Lightroom. Skin smoothing, blemish removal, and even contouring can be done easily, all nondestructively. When it comes to any kind of reshaping of the face, we need to go to an external application. Of course we could look to Photoshop, but there are more automated routes via dedicated retouching programs. One of those is PortraitPro 12 from Anthropics Technology.

Each of the currently available retouching plug-ins has wildly differing feature sets. PortraitPro is based on automatic correction from identified facial features, mixed with an expansive set of manual controls to refine that correction. These refinements can be saved as presets for later use. The program comes in three versions: Standard, Studio, and Studio Max. For Lightroom use, you need the Studio or Studio Max versions. There's a trial available, with the restriction that you can't save and the word "Trial" shows on the photo. Let's get started.

step one: After installing PortraitPro, we need to set it up as an external editor. Choose Lightroom (PC: Edit)>Preferences and click on the External Editing tab. In the Additional External Editor section, click Choose. Browse to where PortraitPro was installed (usually in the Applications on a Mac, or Program Files on a PC) and click Choose.

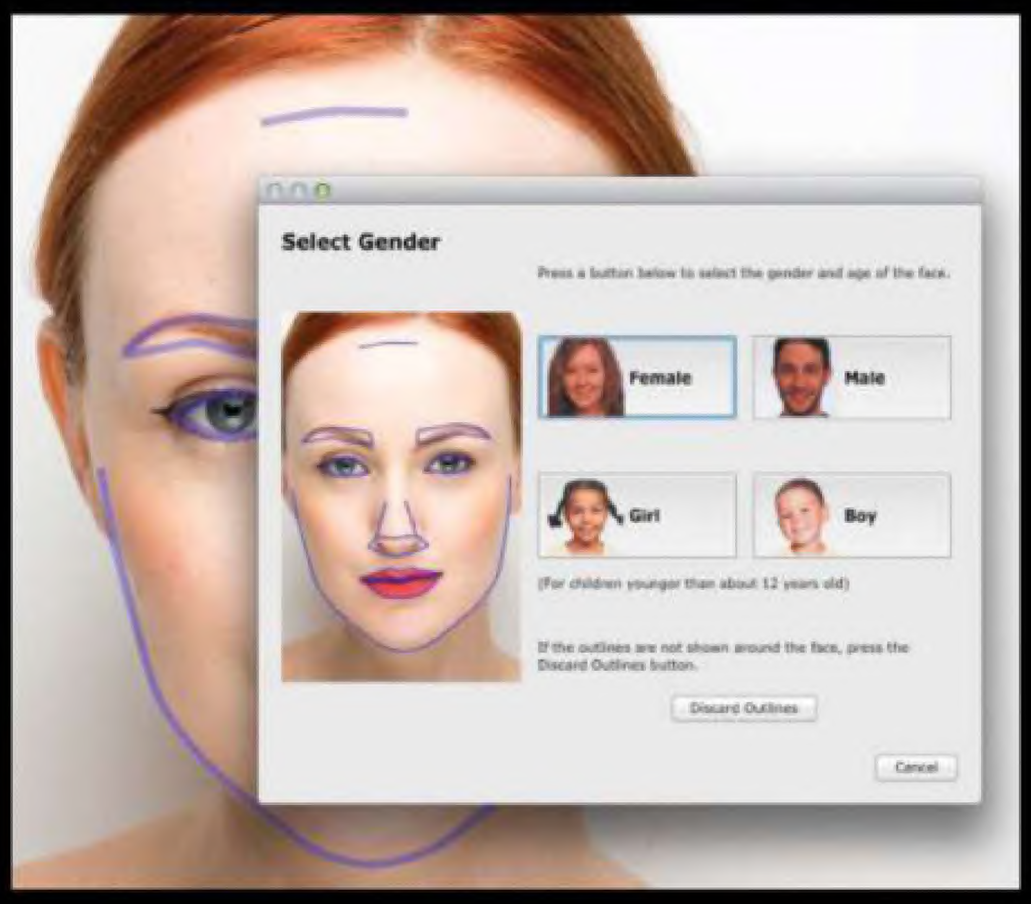


step two: Set the File Format to TIFF for the best results. Set the other options to your taste. Click the Preset drop-down menu and select Save Current Settings as New Preset. Name it PortraitPro Studio and click Create.

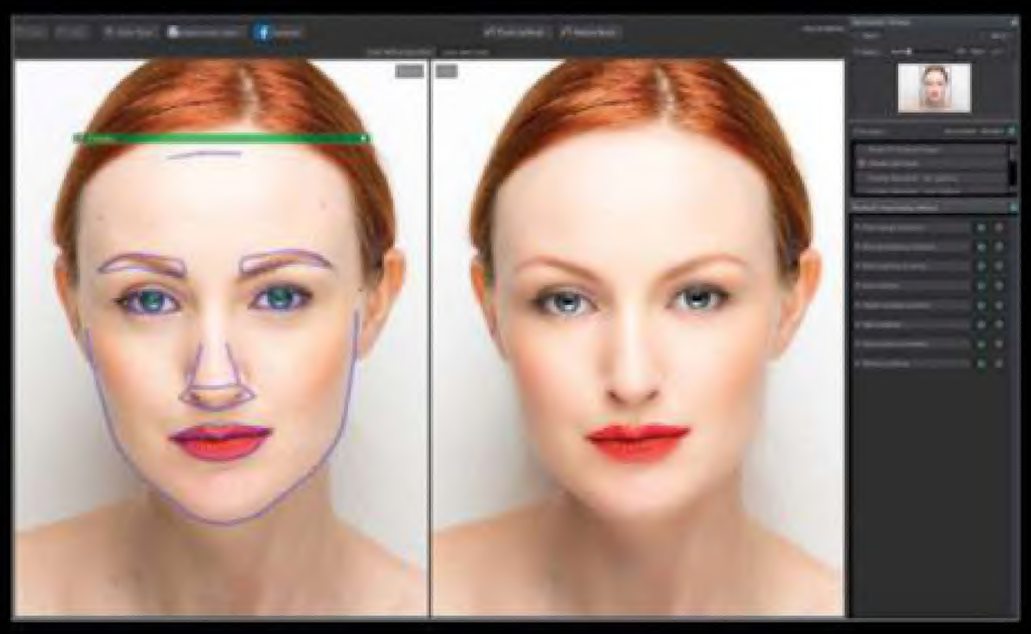


step three: Select the photo you'd like to edit or use the download file provided. To open PortraitPro, go to Photo>Edit in and select PortraitPro Studio. In the dialog that appears, click the Edit a Copy with Lightroom Adjustments radio button, then click Edit. The first thing PortraitPro will do is find the faces in your photo. It presents you with a dialog so you can assign the gender and age (adult or child). If you're working with the download, click Female to begin. *Note*: If you want to have PortraitPro operate as a true plug-in, go to PortraitPro (PC: Edit)>Preferences, check Auto Plug-in Mode at the bottom of the Settings dialog, and click OK.

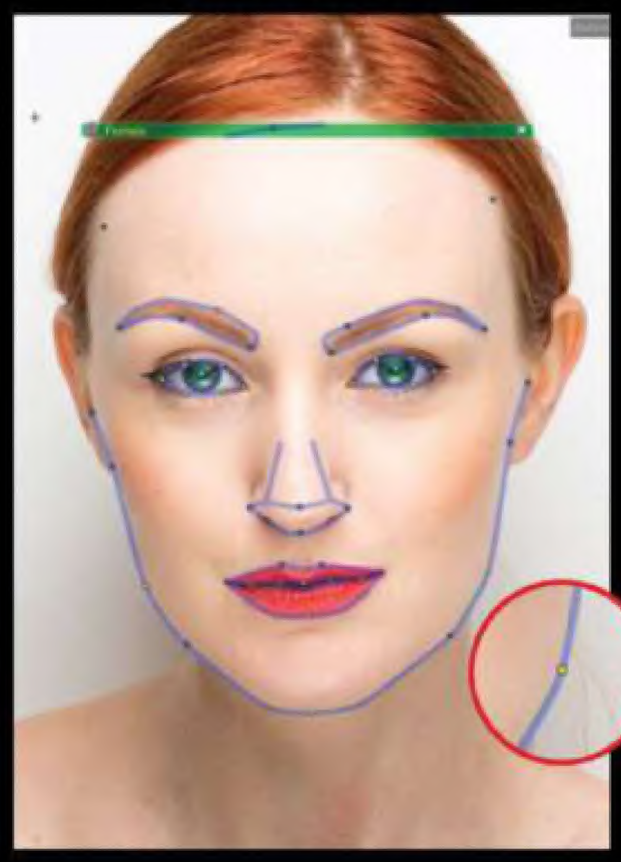
[*KelbyOne members may download the file used in this tutorial at http://kelbyone.com/magazine/issue/december-2014. All files are for personal use only.*]



step four: PortraitPro will now make its automatic corrections based on the default Female Standard preset in the Presets panel. On the left is the original face, and a purple face outline that needs to be matched to the contours of the face (visible as you hover over the face). On the right is the corrected version based on default settings.



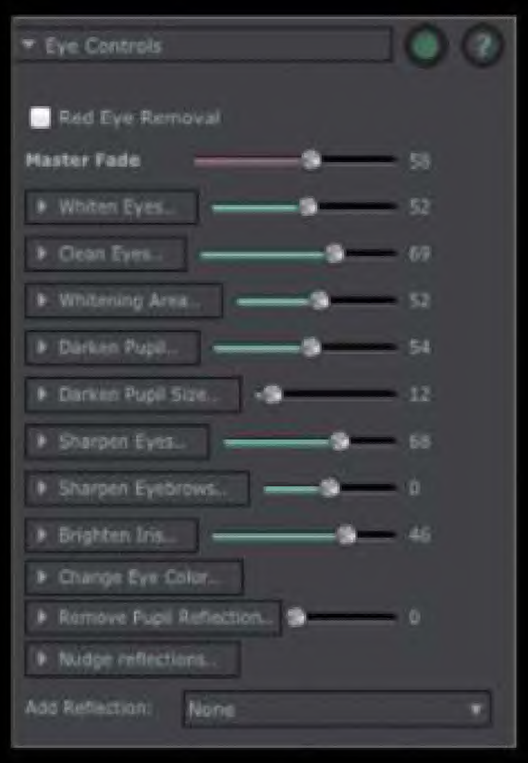
step five: Use the yellow control points on the purple lines to match the contour of the face for more exact control on the retouching. The default corrections are quite impressive for simply opening a file and selecting where the facial structure is. From here you can opt to switch from the before and after view to just the after view. Click the Flip to Before button at the top right to see the before view, and release the mouse button to return to the after view.

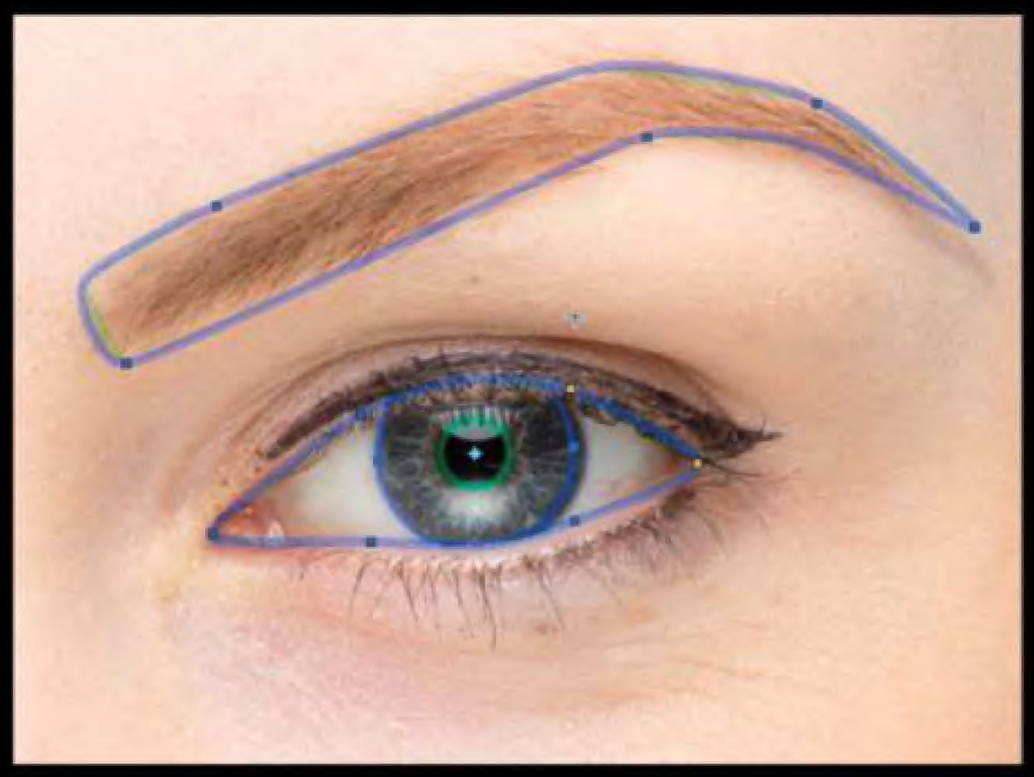


Tip: While we're talking about views, the Enhance Photo panel is docked by default, but can be a floating window by going to View and unchecking Dock Controls Panel. The top of the panel has a navigator view and controls for Zoom levels with a preview of the zoom location.

step six: Below the navigator is the Presets panel, which we'll come back to. Below the Presets are the Portrait Improving Sliders, which are manual controls for the retouching. A quick way to decide what areas need changing is to turn off each set of controls by clicking the green button. By turning off the Skin Lighting, Eye, and Picture Controls, the photo looks more natural to me. This would make a great preset to begin the retouching. The eyes do need help, though, so turn it back on and let's get to work.

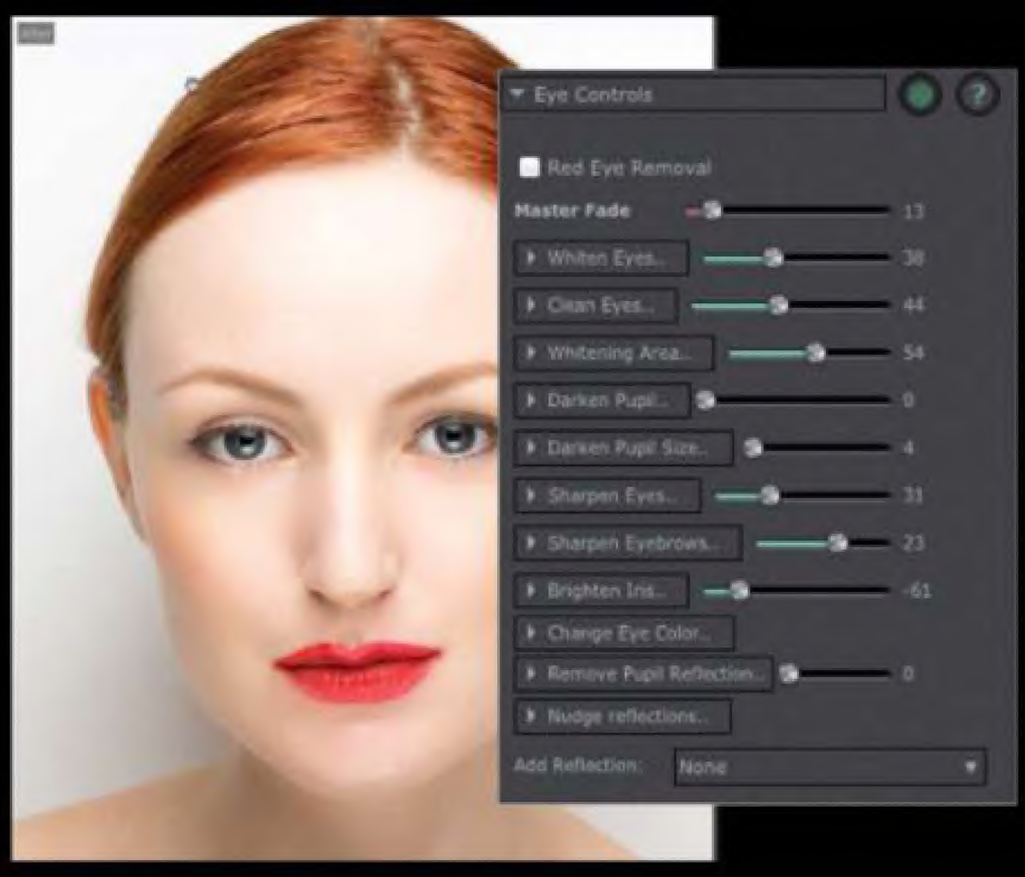
step seven: Click on the disclosure triangle to the left of Eye Controls to reveal the individual sliders. The Red Eye Removal checkbox is at the top, and below is the Master Fade slider, which allows proportional control over all the currently applied sliders. Using the Eye Controls is straightforward, as each section is well-labeled. It's vital that the purple outlines match the relevant areas of the eye, so the pupil tools work only on the pupil, for example. If you want even more control, click the disclosure triangle for each slider to gain control over the left and right eye separately. This level of detail is what makes PortraitPro so useful.



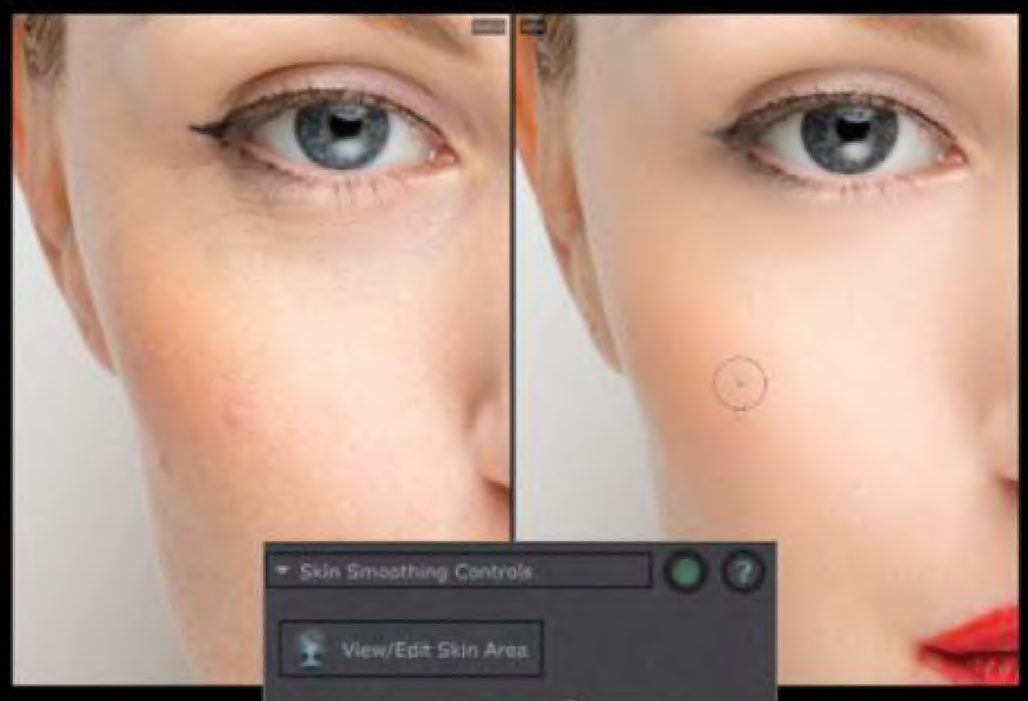


step eight: Go down through the sliders and change to taste. Check the minimum and maximum settings to get a feel for the range of looks, and then hone in on what pleases you. Remember to switch between 1:1 and Fit in the navigator so you can see how your settings look on the whole face. You can see my settings here.

Note: If you're missing catchlights, the Add Reflection drop-down menu can bring life back to the eyes. Choose a type of light from the list and use the Nudge Reflections controls to get an exact position in the eyes.

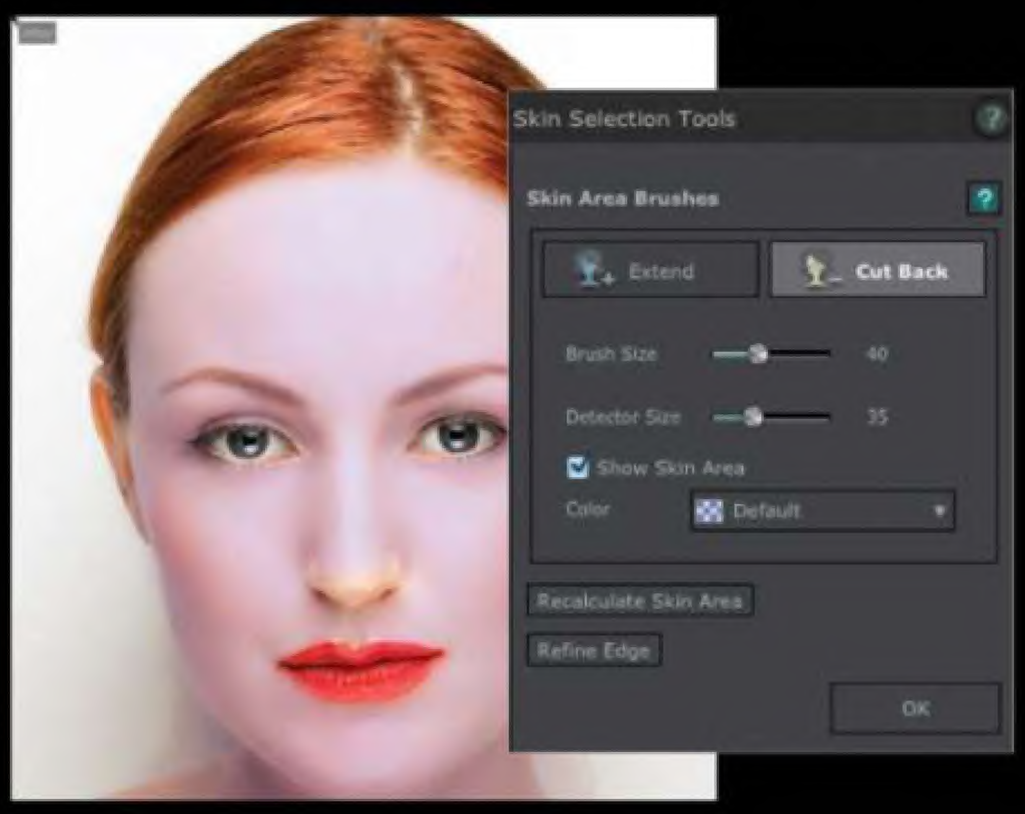


step nine: With the eyes fixed, let's check the Skin Smoothing Controls. The default settings look good, but could benefit from a tweak to remove more spots. At the bottom of the panel is the Spot Removal drop-down menu.

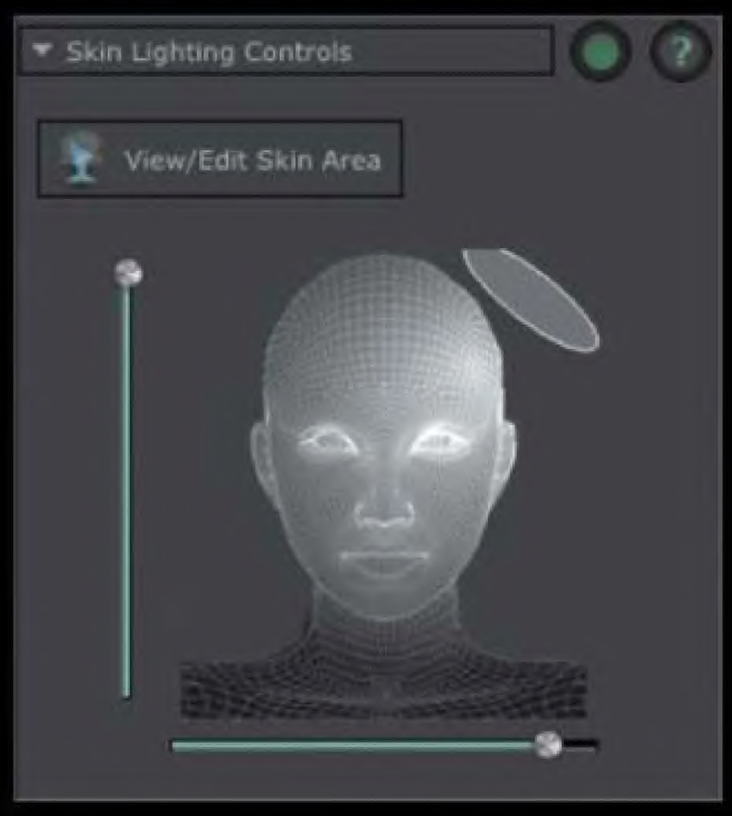


The default setting is quite low, so even changing to a Low or Medium Sensitivity helps. There are some large spots that are being missed even with this, so it's time to use the Touch Up Brush. Click the Touch Up Brush button above the photo and paint on the spots to remove them. If the undereye area is a little dark, the brush can help there.

step ten: If you find areas of the skin that aren't affected, click the View/Edit Skin Area button. The skin area will be covered in a purple mask. The Extend and Cut Back buttons allow you to change the mask. For this image, I extended the mask to include the shoulders. Click OK when you're done setting the skin area. This control is available in the skin-related panels.



step eleven: One of the new features in PortraitPro 12 is Skin Lighting. We've had this turned off so far, but it's time to see what it can do. Upon opening the Skin Lighting Controls, we're presented with a mesh face with a circle on it. This circle is the light source and dragging it around adds light and shadow to the face, creating a new source that wasn't in the original image. I confess to being impressed with this, and while this image is already lit, I can certainly see uses for it in shots with flatter light.



The Contrast slider changes the size of the light. A lower setting emulates a larger, softer light source, while a higher setting produces a smaller, harder source. Modeling controls the focus of the light: a higher value adds much more shape to the face. Fix Lighting flattens the light. The remaining sliders add shadows as they're named. Smokey Eyes adds an evening makeup look to the eyes, while Pout adds a shadow under the lips. As this photo was already lit, we'll turn off the Skin Lighting Controls again.

step twelve: Face sculpting is one thing that can't be done in Lightroom. The default settings in the Face Sculpt Controls look good, but like everything in PortraitPro, they're extensively tweakable. The key elements here are the overall face shape and the eyes. Most people (women especially) will benefit from having wider eyes. Use the Eye Widening slider for this. The Eyes section allows you to reshape eyes separately, as well as fix Cross Eyed features. Eyebrows can also be reshaped.

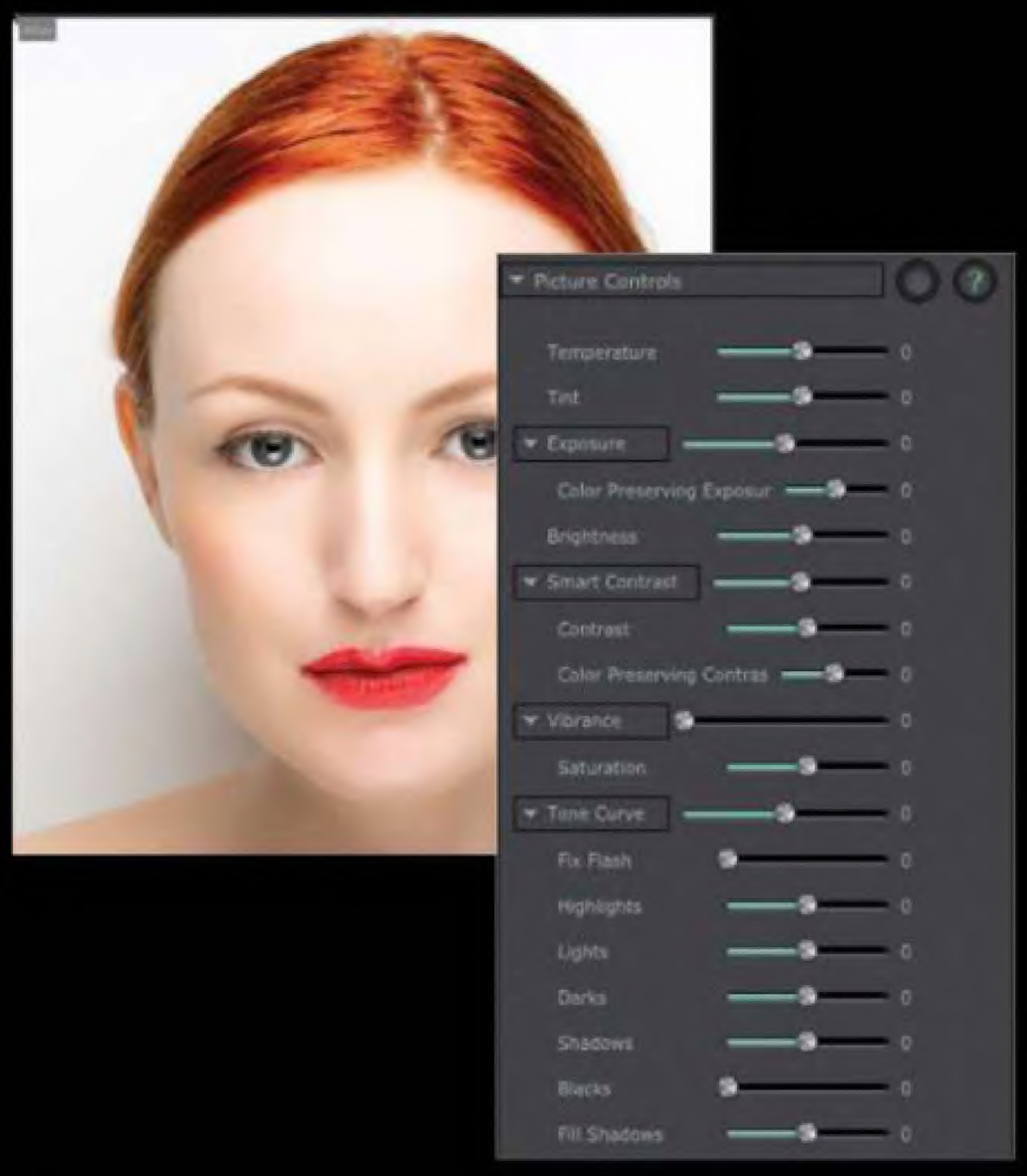
The nose, mouth, and lips can also be reshaped here. The neck can be extended for a more graceful look. Face sculpting is one area where the subject will probably have something to say because, ultimately, you're changing how she looks.

step thirteen: By now, I'm sure you have the hang of using the plug-in. It's so straightforward to use. Let's briefly look at the remaining panels. The Mouth & Nose Controls panel is for teeth whitening or cleaning (these controls only appear if there are teeth

visible in the image), lip coloring, contrast, and darkness along with sharpening the mouth and teeth. Hair Controls allow you to recolor the hair via a drop-down menu of hair photos, along with adding Shine and Vibrance. You also have the ability to Lighten or Redden the hair. Similar to the skin-related panels, there's a View/Edit Hair Area button to allow editing of the hair mask.

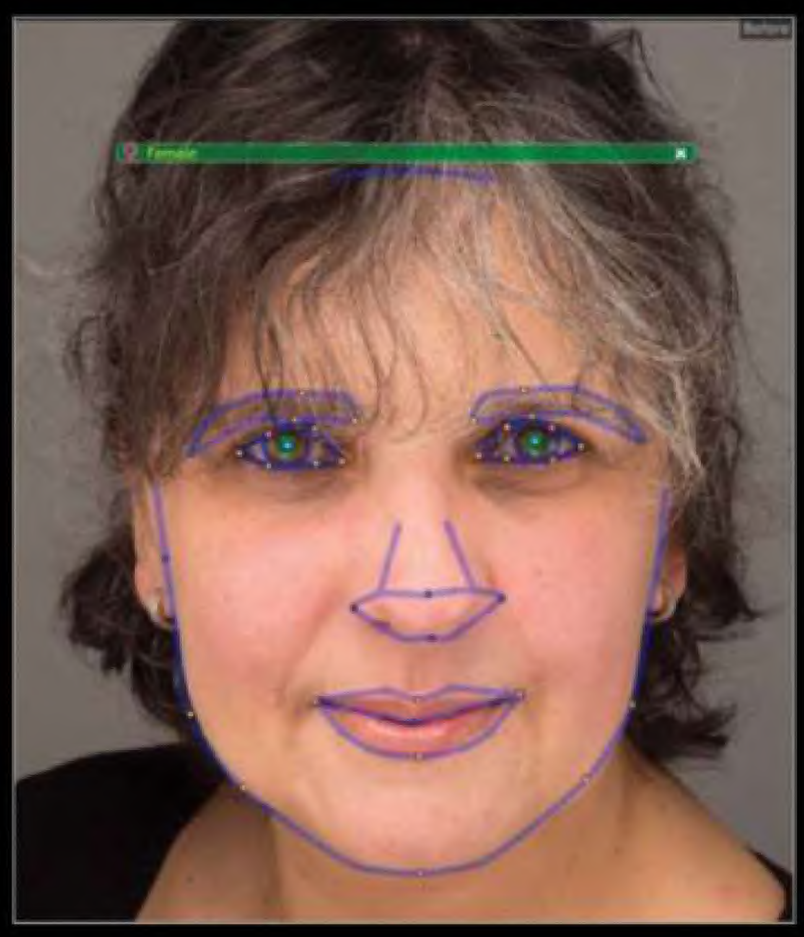
step fourteen: Skin Coloring Controls let you color-correct the skin, as well as adjust the Temperature and Tint. There's a separate slider to control the color outside the face, as well. There's also a Cheek Coloring control with separate hue and saturation controls for each cheek. Finally, you can change the Tan color and strength on the skin.

step fifteen: The final panel is Picture Controls. This panel gives control of the overall look of the photo. It's reminiscent of the Basic panel in Lightroom with Temperature, Tint, Exposure, Brightness, Smart Contrast, Vibrance (including Saturation), and Tone Curve. The Tone Curve contains controls similar to that of the parametric tone curve in Lightroom. I think the Basic panel in Lightroom gives more control, so you don't have to use this panel.



step sixteen: If you like the overall look and want to use it again without all the effort, go to the Presets panel and click Save Preset. This brings up the Save Preset dialog where you can save settings as a preset, set it as the default preset, and choose which panel settings get saved in the preset. You can manage presets from there, too. To save the image and send it back to Lightroom, click the Save button (or the Return From Plugin button if you're running it as a plug-in) at the top left. The retouched image will appear in Lightroom with the original.

The photo used here is of a model, but the controls work exactly the same for everyone. Here's how the preset we created looks on a more mature (and awesome) lady. It's a little too much, but still a quick start for a happy client.



A word of warning: It's easy to overdo it, and with retouching, less is more. The Studio Max version of PortraitPro provides full batch processing, so wedding photographers especially can take advantage of the time savings involved in fixing large quantities. ■

ALL IMAGES BY SEAN McCORMACK

You wait for clients who are "just a little" late.

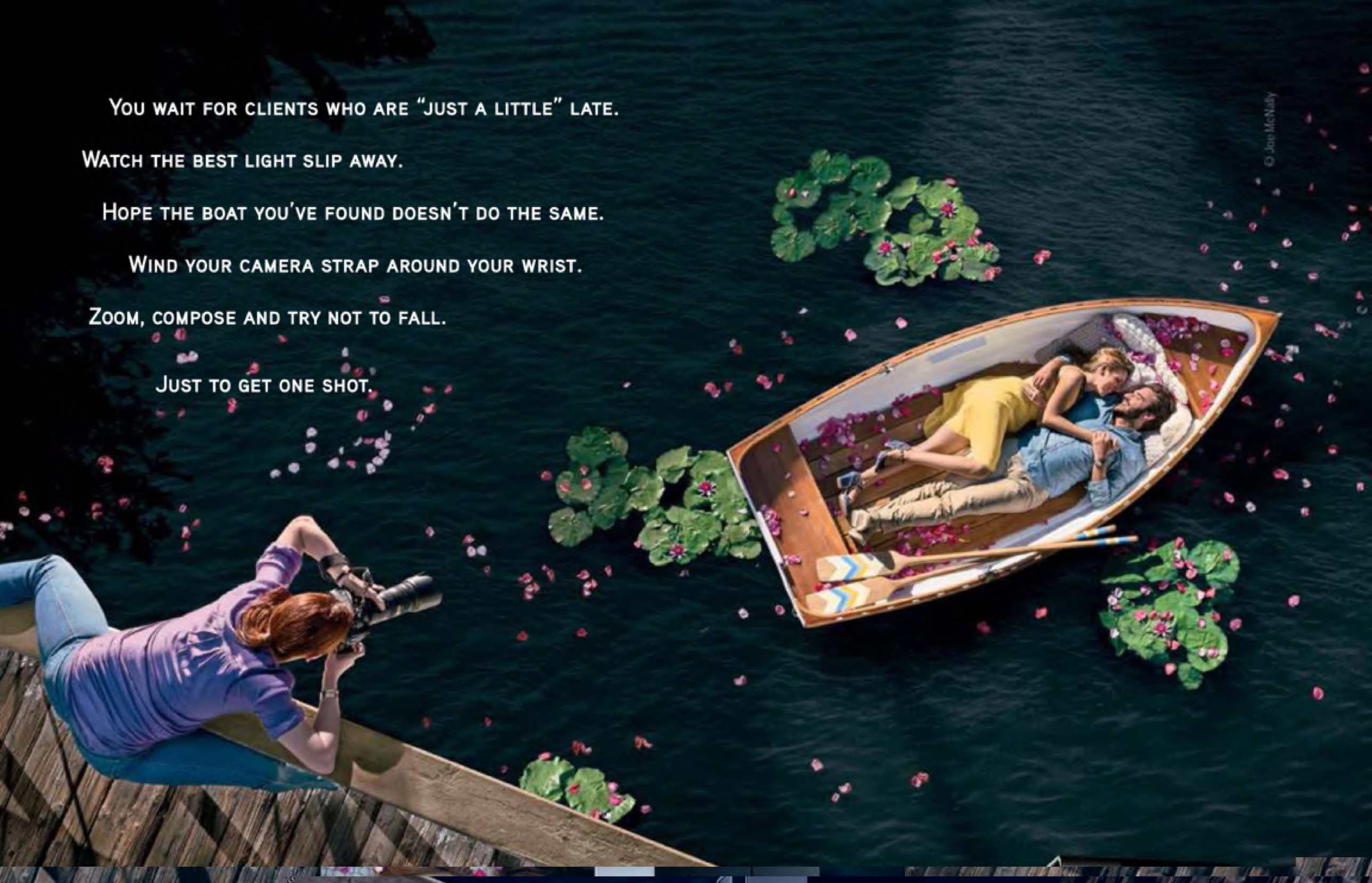
Watch the best light slip away.

Hope the boat you've found doesn't do the same.

Wind your camera strap around your wrist.

Zoom, compose and try not to fall.

Just to get one shot.



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Tips & Tricks

SEÁN DUGGAN

lightroom catalog forensics

I have a network of photography and digital workflow consulting clients that I work with, both in person and online, and recently I've run into some interesting catalog issues that required some creative solutions to resolve them. One of the things that helped me solve these problems was knowing what to expect in terms of how a certain operation would affect the overall catalog. A key component behind the scenes was a test catalog.

why you should make a test catalog

Test catalogs aren't just for consultants or those who teach and write about Lightroom. I strongly recommend that everyone maintain a test catalog in addition to his or her main image catalog. A test catalog (some like to call it a "stunt catalog") can be used to test various catalog operations without worrying that you might cause a problem in your primary catalog, or to the images it references.

setting up a test catalog folder structure

For a test catalog to be useful, it should contain a fair number of images. It doesn't need to have thousands of images (though some people do have test catalogs that large), but you should consider having at least several hundred shots in it. These should be a variety of file formats that you regularly use: RAW files, DNGs, JPEGs, TIFFs, and PSDs. Create a special file directory for your test catalog containing a nested folder structure that's similar to what you have in your main image archive, and copy the files into this test catalog folder structure. For this operation you can copy the files using the Mac Finder or the Windows Explorer. For example, I made an upper-level folder called "Test Catalog Files" (to make it clear that's what they're for), and then inside that I created several folders for different years, and within each year folder I added several folders of images.

creating a new catalog

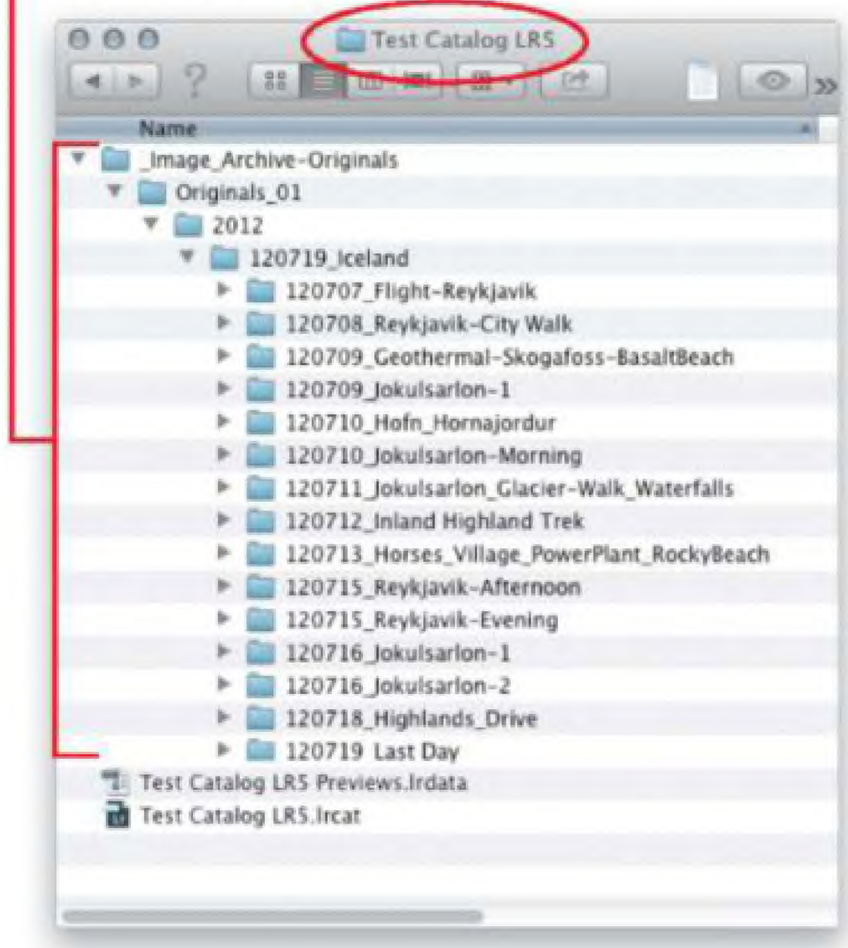
Once you have the folder structure set up and have copied a range of different file types into it, open Lightroom and choose File>New Catalog. Target the folder you already created for your test catalog files and give it a name that makes it clear what it is. Then, import the images you already copied to that folder.

set up a test catalog using export as catalog

Another way to set up a test catalog is to create a collection in your main catalog and add lots of images to it. Make sure to use a range of different file formats. Once you've added a few hundred images to the collection, make sure the collection is selected and choose File>Export as Catalog. You can also Right-click on the collection and choose Export this Collection as a Catalog. In the Export as Catalog dialog, make sure to choose Export Negative Files (this will make a copy of the files).

When the process is done, find the .lrcat file for this new test catalog and double-click it to open it into Lightroom. The nice thing about creating a test catalog this way is that any collections that the images were already a part of in your main catalog will be duplicated in the test catalog. Existing metadata such as ratings, flags, and keywords are also carried over. Even the nested folder structure of where the original images were stored is re-created inside the test catalog folder.

Original folder structure is duplicated in the Export as Catalog process



what to do with a test catalog

Once you have the test catalog up and running, you might wonder how you should use it. If you've ever wondered how to do a certain catalog operation, but weren't sure about doing it to your main catalog, that's a perfect thing to try out with the test catalog. For instance, if you've never done an Import from Another Catalog process, you can use this to test the steps needed to merge two catalogs together. This is a procedure that I use all the time for integrating images from a trip that I've recently returned from.

The test catalog is your proving ground for running through new catalog management procedures that you may not be totally sure about. By first experimenting with the test catalog, you'll know what to expect when you need to do something similar with your real Lightroom catalog. ■

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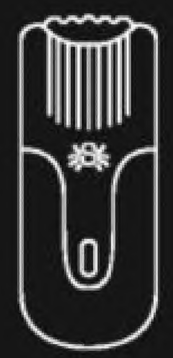

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Color

Control, Exposure, and Creativity

By Kevin Ames

The photography session is finished and the camera, props, and lights are all put away. The work is complete. Not really. Postproduction includes refining the exposure, color correction, and creativity—all in Adobe Camera Raw.

Once the shoot is complete and the RAW files (you are shooting RAW, right?) have been downloaded and backed up, the rest of the work begins in earnest. There's the necessary color corrections and exposure refinements, then the fun begins: exploring the depths of photographic goodness in those versatile RAW files.

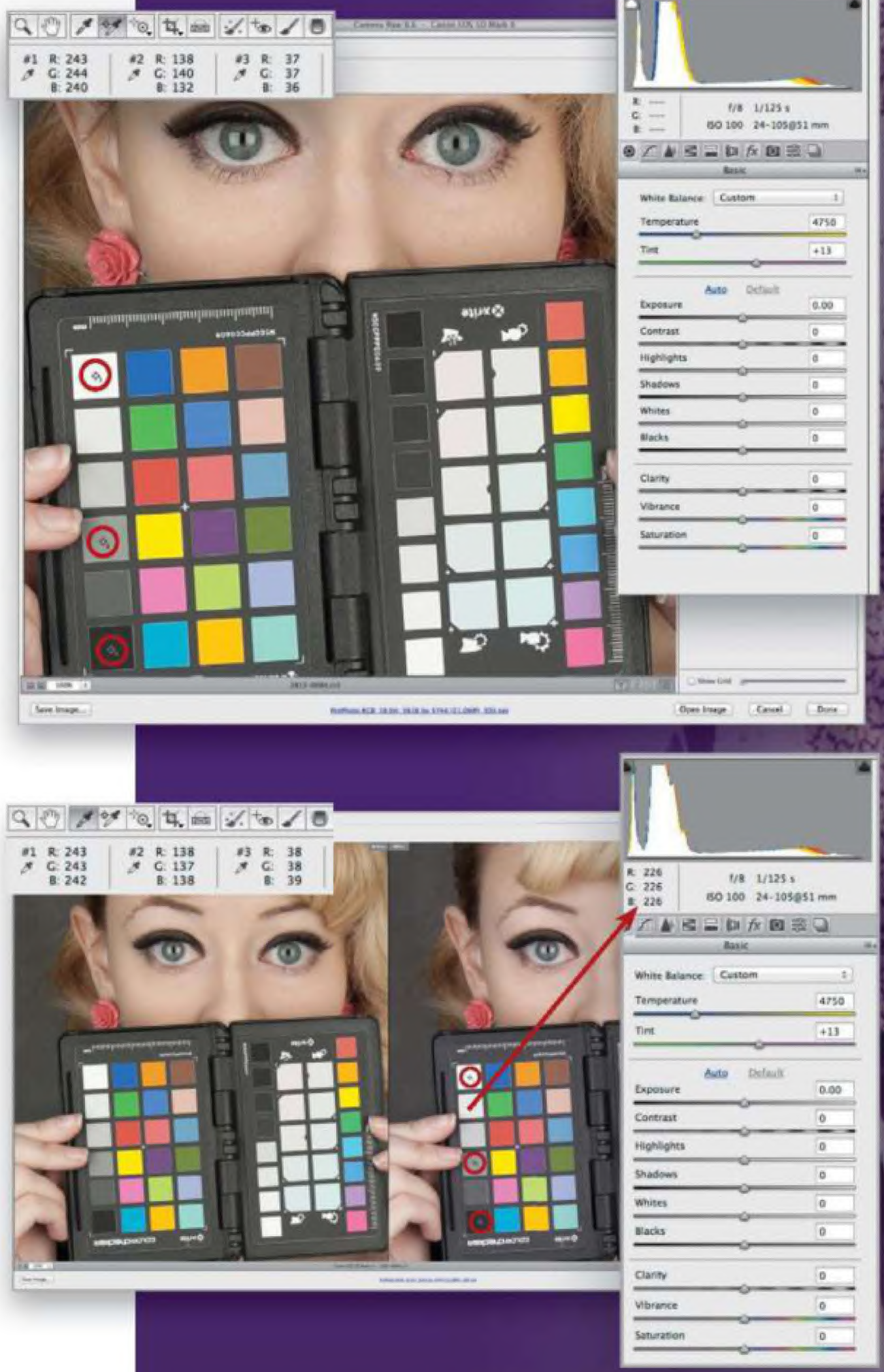
COLOR FIRST

The best place to start is with neutral color. Eliminating highlight color cast is a snap in both Camera Raw and Lightroom. The key is having a colorimetrically neutral target in the photograph. The standard tool is the 24-patch ColorChecker brand target from X-Rite. Model Jennie Carroll is holding the ColorChecker Passport that I carry everywhere my camera goes.

The white patch (#1 sampler) reads R:243, G:244, B:240; the middle gray (#2 sampler) is R:138, G:140, B:132; and the black (#3 sampler) shows R:37, G:37, B:36. In each instance, the red and green are brighter than the blue. The color cast is slightly yellow.

Correcting the highlights couldn't be easier. In Camera Raw, tap the I key for the White Balance tool, or press W for the same tool in Lightroom. Click on the patch just below the white one on the ColorChecker. That's it.

After correction, the numbers are much closer to neutral. Sampler #1 is now R:243, G:243, B:242; sampler #2 now reads R:138, G:137, B:138; and #3 shows R:38, G:38, B:39. The White Balance tool was clicked on the patch immediately below the #1 sampler to neutralize the photograph. Their numbers (R:226, G:226, B:226) are the same, so that patch is completely neutral. A one-point difference on the other patches will be more than close enough for all but the most hypercritical color outputs. There are tools in Photoshop that can make the numbers match perfectly. The difference in the example is subtle and yet quite noticeable when they're compared. Camera Raw 8.6 has before and after comparisons in the preview window. Press Q to cycle through the preview modes.

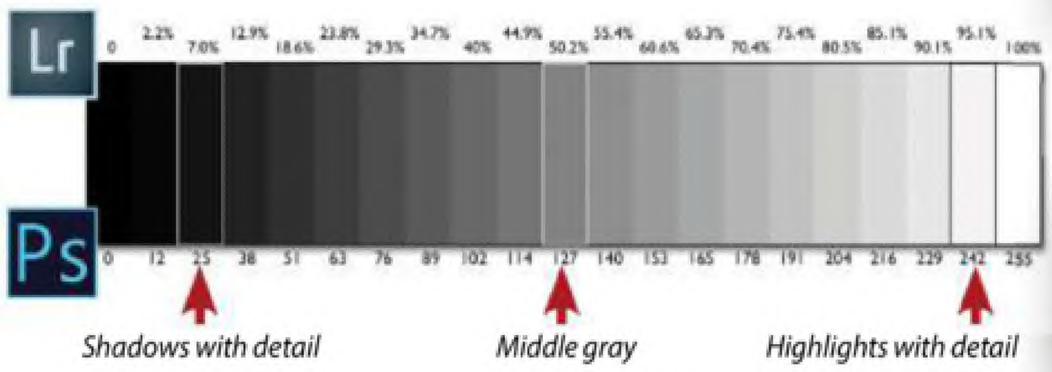


REFINING EXPOSURE

Light meters, particularly incident meters, provide a great starting point for a correct exposure, one that accurately reveals the true tone of the subject. Making certain that the photograph is optimized for reproduction is part of the work in post. A lot of photographers refine exposure using the histogram. Others rely on their monitors (that are calibrated) and judge the result by eye. While that may work for some, the human eye, for all its sensitivity to amounts of light and color, is forever prejudiced by the human brain. The brain does auto exposure and color correction, saying to us, "That looks great! It must be the right color and exposure." Unfortunately, no matter how skilled, the eye and brain combination have a really hard time getting exposure and color right.

Correct Exposure by the Numbers

Computers are great tools for getting technically correct exposures. These are done by comparing readings of known reflectivity patches against reproducible detail in the highlights and shadows. Generally speaking, highlight values with detail fall between 242 and 248 in Photoshop and 95.1% to 95.5% in Lightroom. The shadow detail threshold is 25 for Photoshop and 7% in Lightroom. Readings below will very possibly be completely black.

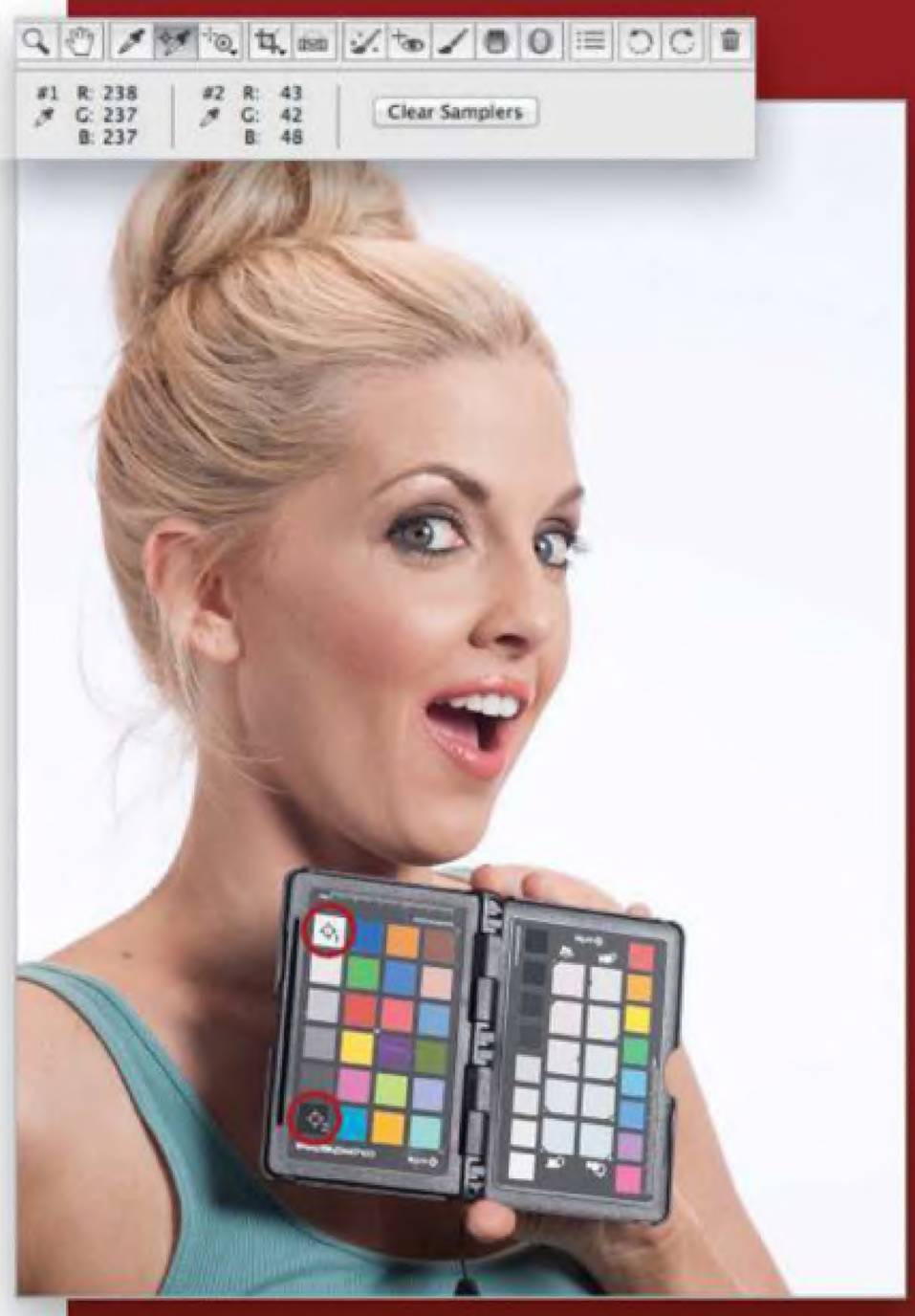


It's important to maintain shadow detail when working in Camera Raw. As tempting as that Contrast or Blacks slider may be for creating drama, resist them at least until you print. It's easy to increase contrast and deepen blacks in Photoshop. It's impossible to get details in the shadows back once the file is converted to pixels.

This example shows the ColorChecker Passport being held by our model Hope from Presence Models in Atlanta. The exposure of her looks good. The histogram looks good. The numbers tell a different story.

Look at the results for the two color samplers on the white patch (#1) and the black one (#2). Values of R:216, G:215, B:215 are considerably under the target of 242-ish (I say "ish" because these are guidelines, not absolutes). The values in #2 (R:24, G:23, B:28) are so low there would be almost no shadow detail. What's going on here?

Two things. First, the light is coming from Hope's left. The incident meter measuring the exposure was aimed directly at it. The exposure on the camera, shown under the histogram, is f/8 at 1/200, ISO 100. Second, the ColorChecker is pointed directly at the camera. It's seeing less light than the meter did. It's important that the ColorChecker is angled toward the light the same way the meter was and not at the camera.



When Hope holds the ColorChecker at the source of light, the highlight numbers are now just below the lower highlight with detail threshold. Notice that Hope's left side is the same brightness in both of the photos.

Tweaking the Exposure Slider

The last part of the exposure refinement is to get the numbers up to approximately 242 or 95.1%. This guarantees there will be detail in those important highlights, such as a bride's wedding gown. I've moved the Exposure slider to +0.30, or an increase of a third of a stop.

The shadows benefit, too. They're now in the 50s, giving lots of detail to the dark side. All that's left is to apply the tweak to the rest of the photo shoot. I allow myself plus or minus a half-stop adjustment on exposure before changing the camera. Any more than that and I'm wasting the depth of data in my capture.

DIVING INTO RAW CAPTURES

This is the fun part. There's so much more data in a RAW capture than what shows on the monitor that the creative opportunities are seemingly endless. We'll start with a silhouette of Vanessa who is standing in front of some sheer curtains.

"Computers are great tools for getting technically correct exposures."

White or Just Light Gray?

The exposure, f/11 at 1/200, ISO 125, renders the background through the curtains as white. Or are they? A quick look at the numbers on the three color samplers shows that the background is evenly lit. The numbers also reveal that its brightness is well below the white, with a detail threshold of 242 to 248. Let's look at how we can tweak the RAW capture.

[*KelbyOne members may download the file used in this tutorial at http://kelbyone.com/magazine/issue/december-2014. All files are for personal use only.*]

Step One: Making this photo into a true silhouette is done differently than you might think. First, drag the Highlights slider to +100 and Shadows to –100. The numbers show that you're almost there. Next, bump up the Whites to +63 and drop the Blacks down to –59. Use the Color Sampler tool (S) to mouse over areas of the photo. The curtains are completely blown out at RGB:255, while Vanessa is completely black at RGB:0. The point to note here is that neither the Exposure nor Contrast slider is involved.

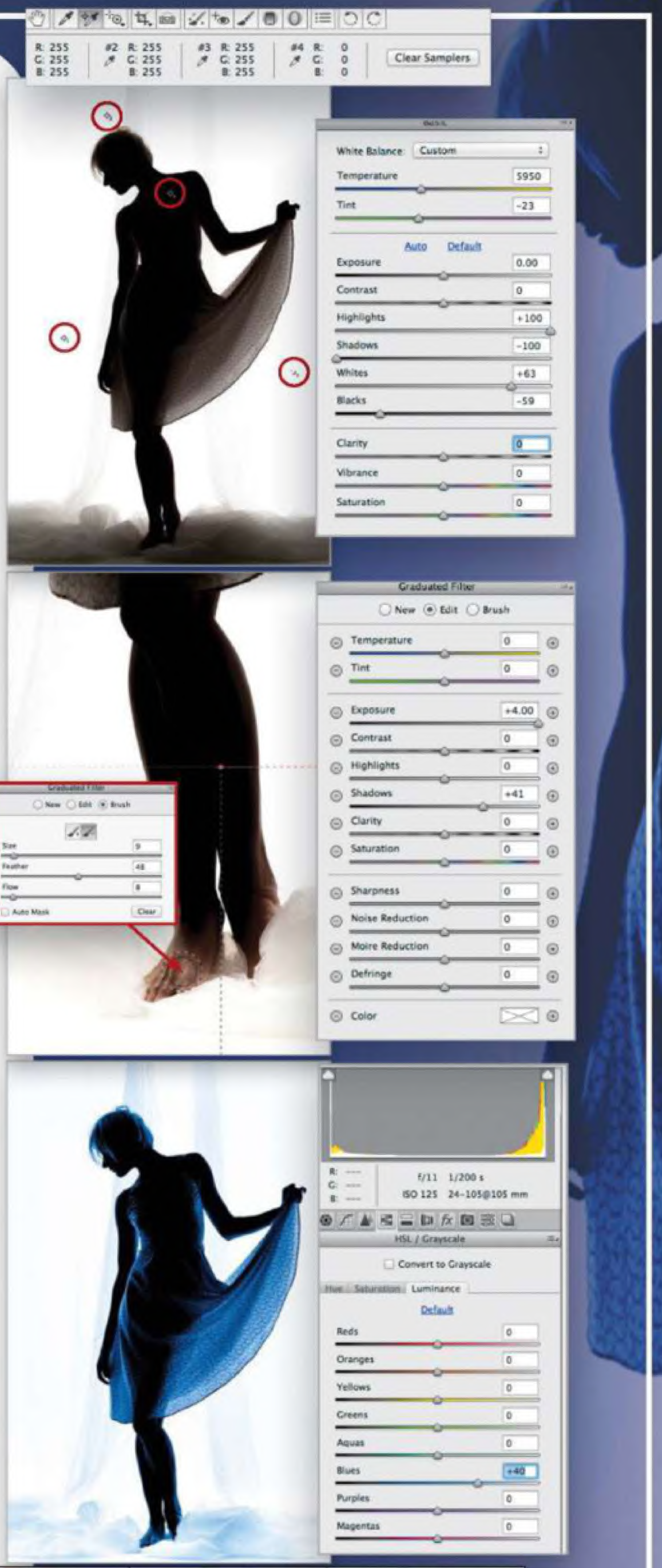
The Highlights slider works on values from middle gray (PS: 127, LR: 50.2%) to white (PS: 255, LR: 100%). The Shadows slider controls middle gray and goes down to black (PS: 0, LR: 0%). The Whites and Blacks sliders work on the same ranges as Highlights and Shadows, respectively.

Step Two: The floor and the curtains want to be closer to white, too. Use the Graduated Filter (G) in Camera Raw or (M) in Lightroom. Click-and-drag a Graduated Filter up from the bottom of the frame. Set Exposure to +4.00 and Shadows to +41. The floor is white and the curtains are a much lighter tone, but her feet are too bright. Camera Raw 8.6 has a Brush radio button at the top of the Graduated Filter tab. Click it and an Add to (+) and Subtract from (–) brush icon appears. Click the Subtract from brush, then paint away the excessive brightness using a 9-pixel brush with a Feather of 48 and Flow of 8. This will darken her feet to make them look like they're lit by the light on the floor. When you're done, press G to exit the Graduated Filter (press M in Lightroom).

Step Three: Color! The monochromatic version is good, but how about some color? Drag the Temperature slider all the way left to 2000 to make it blue. Set Clarity to 100 and Vibrance to 13 and the sheers are now much more detailed. To lighten them, click the HSL / Grayscale tab (fourth icon). Click the Luminance tab then drag Blues to the right to about +40.

This is quite a change from the original photograph. Experiment with other colors, starting with a warmer temperature. Check out the Tint slider, too, and mix in the HSL / Grayscale panel.

The new tools in Camera Raw make creative exploration of all of the data you've captured available to use as your imagination dreams. Go play! ■



ALL IMAGES BY KEVIN AMES

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Photoshop Proving Ground

channel selections

SCOTT VALENTINE

One of the ways you can slice and dice your images for building masks is by taking advantage of the luminosity and brightness of the image. This issue, I want to share a few advanced tricks for working with channel selections. Using these techniques, you can build precise adjustment masks in short order for ultimate control over your photos. Reminder, for masks, white reveals and black conceals.

▶ **Step One:** To begin, download the sjv_LuminosityExperiment.psd file and open it in Photoshop. The gray bars are the same as the black-to-white gradient but they make it easier to compare some changes and find midpoints as you work with the file. The solid-color bars are set to 100% brightness for each color, and the file is built in the RGB color space with 16-bit depth for simplicity.

[*KelbyOne members may download the files used in this tutorial at http://kelbyone.com/magazine/issue/december-2014. All files are for personal use only.*]

Note: I built the experiment file using gamma settings of 2.2 for both RGB and gray. If you're not familiar with these settings, read up on color profile management and monitor calibration. Using different settings will result in your experiment file looking a bit different, but don't let that be the only reason to adjust your settings.

Before your proceed to Step Two, double-click the Edit in Quick Mask Mode icon (dotted circle in a square) near the bottom of the Toolbox. In the Quick Mask Options dialog that appears, make sure the Masked Areas radio button is selected, then click OK. Press Q to exit Quick Mask mode.

Step Two: Go to the Channels panel (Window>Channels). Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) on the RGB channel to load the luminosity. You should see marching ants around the selected areas in the screen. The RGB channel is a *composite* that shows you what's currently visible on the screen. When you load the luminosity, you're using the current canvas view. That means you can change the luminosity by changing characteristics in your layer stack, such as Opacity, blend modes, and adjustment layers.

Step Three: Click the Save Selection as Channel icon (circle in a square) at the bottom of the Channels panel. This creates an alpha channel and stores the selection for later use. More importantly, it lets you edit the selection as if it were a grayscale layer. While you can use many different tools on alpha channels, we'll stick to working with selections and adjustments this time around. Double-click the Alpha 1 channel's name to rename the channel "L1" for Light 1.

If it strikes you odd that the three color bars are different shades of gray in L1 than they are in their own channels, don't worry; that's the difference between brightness and luminosity. Note that if you want *brightness* of a color, use the color channels. If you want *luminosity* of your image, use the composite channel.

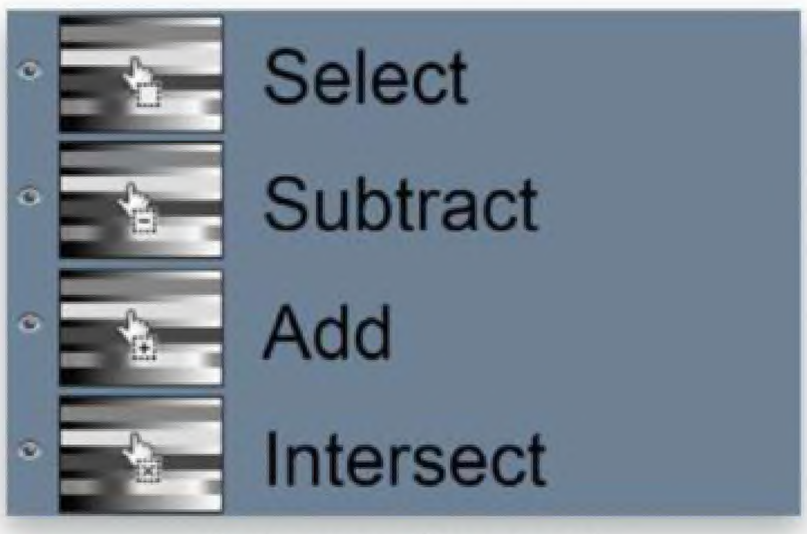
Working with Luminosity Channels

You can use the new luminosity channel L1 as a mask by either Command-clicking (PC: Ctrl-clicking) on the channel thumbnail, or by choosing Select>Load Selection. Once loaded as a selection, it will be automatically applied as a mask when you choose an adjustment layer or add a mask to an existing layer. You can also fill the selection on a mask or regular layer. Experiment with those techniques on your own.

The fun and useful part of all of this is refining your selections. With an active selection, you can add to, subtract from, or intersect with information on other channels. Let's say you have Channel A and Channel B. Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) on Channel A to load the gray values of Channel A into a selection, then:

- Command-Option-click (PC: Ctrl-Alt-click) on Channel B to subtract B from A
- Shift-Command-click (PC: Shift-Ctrl-click) on Channel B to add B to A
- Shift-Command-Option-click (PC: Shift-Ctrl-Alt-click) on Channel B to intersect B and A

Each of these gives you different active selections, but you have to create a new channel or mask to see the results.

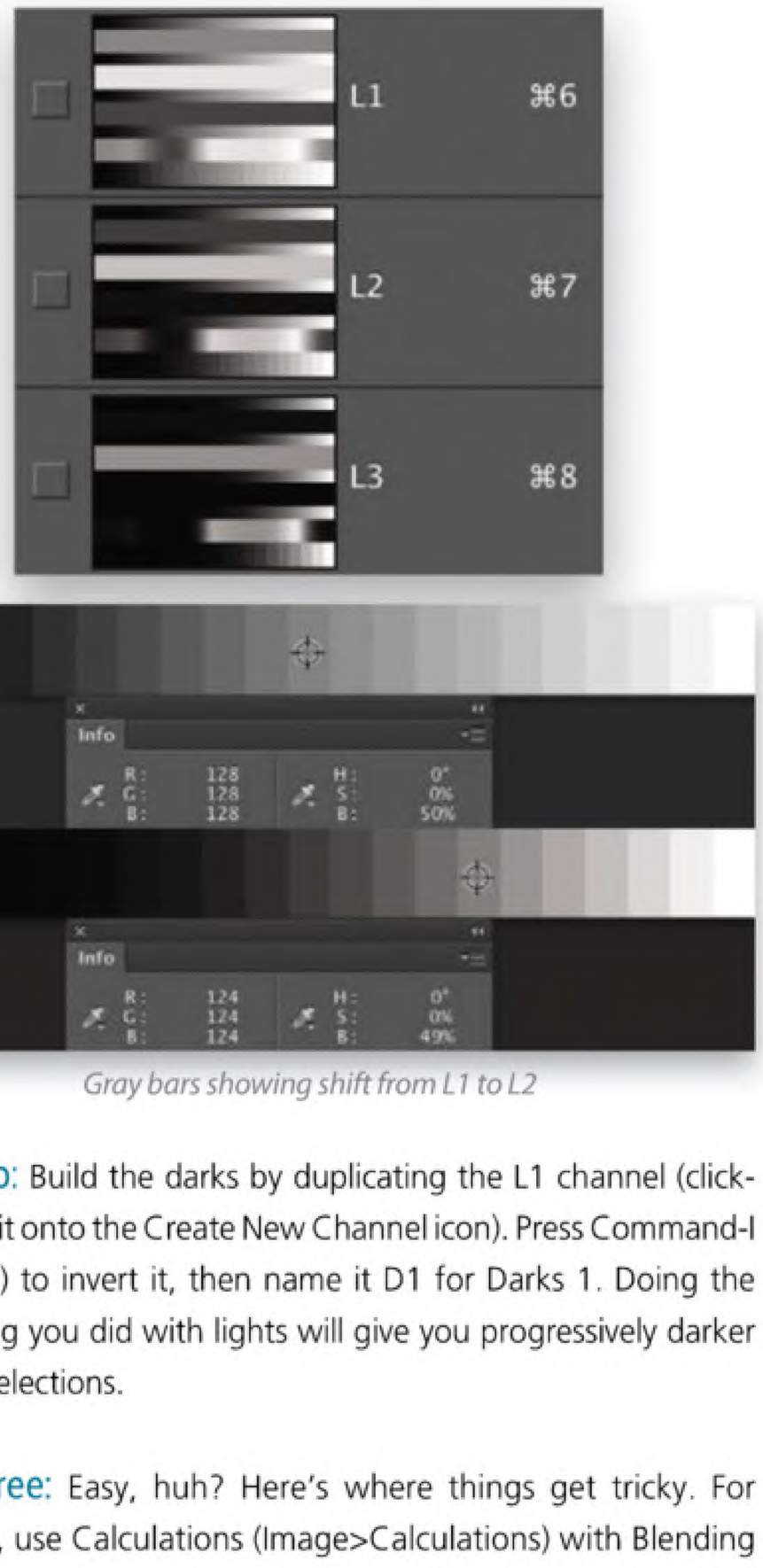


Each command's cursor mod

Build Luminosity Masks

To build luminosity masks for different values, say lights (L1), bright lights (L2), and specular lights (L3), you'll use the Intersect command on the same layer. Intersect compares the current selection with the new selection and only keeps the overlap. When you intersect a selection with itself, such as by loading A and intersecting A, you're basically compressing the dynamic range of the selection, where 50% gray becomes 25%, but 100% stays 100%.

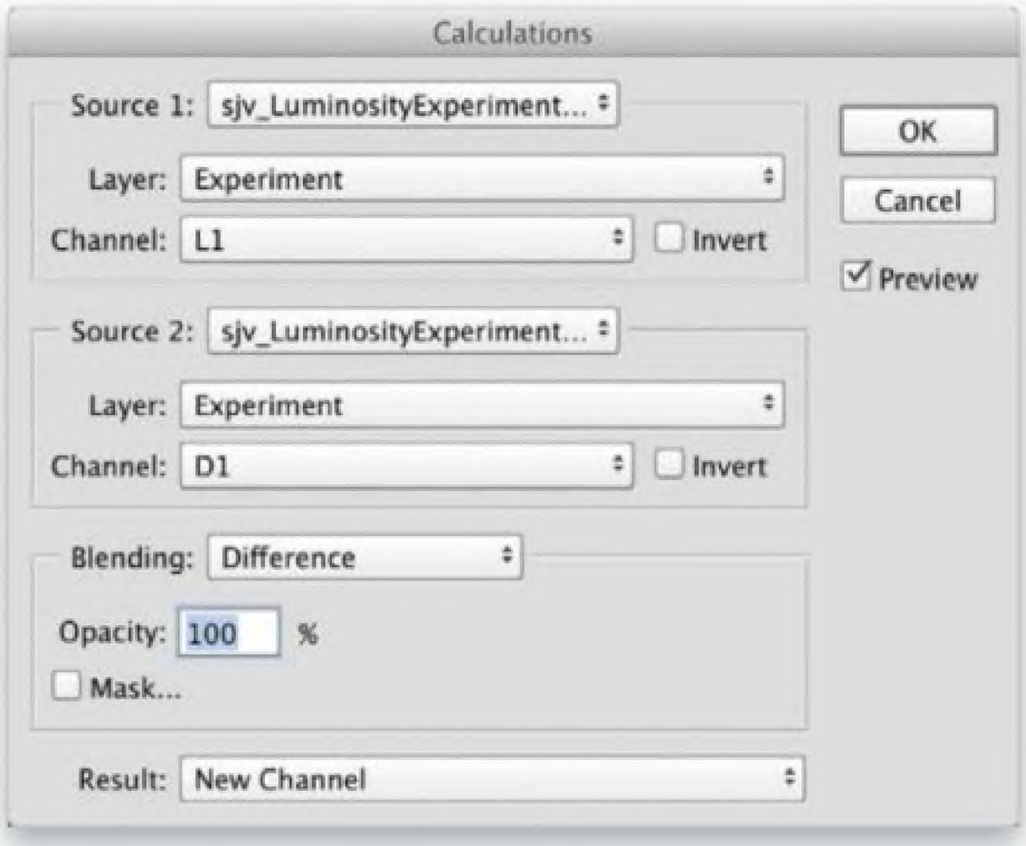
Step One: Use the Eyedropper tool (I) and the Info panel (Window>Info) to see that the center gray bar at the bottom in L1 is 50% gray. (*Note:* If you don't see the HSB values in the Info panel, click on the panel's flyout menu at the top right, and select Panel Options. In the Info Panel Options dialog, select HSB Color in the Mode drop-down menu in the Second Color Readout section, and click OK.) Load L1 as a selection, then Shift-Command-Option-click (PC: Shift-Ctrl-Alt-click) on L1 again to intersect it with itself. Click the Save Selection as Channel icon and note that everything has shifted. All the grays are darker and the 50% midpoint has moved to the right. Name this new channel L2. Repeat the process for L3 by loading L2 and intersecting it with itself. Note the shifts and that you're zeroing in on the brightest highlights. Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect.



Gray bars showing shift from L1 to L2

Step Two: Build the darks by duplicating the L1 channel (click-and-drag it onto the Create New Channel icon). Press Command-I (PC: Ctrl-I) to invert it, then name it D1 for Darks 1. Doing the same thing you did with lights will give you progressively darker shadow selections.

Step Three: Easy, huh? Here's where things get tricky. For midtones, use Calculations (Image>Calculations) with Blending set to Difference (see the dialog below for other settings), and click OK. Press Command-I (PC: Ctrl-I) to invert the result, and name it M1. Repeat the intersection technique to get narrower midtone masks. You must use Difference and not the Subtract command above because Difference uses absolute values. Try



both and note that Difference gives you symmetry in the overlapping grayscale bars, with white on the edges and black in the middle.

If you're really familiar with color theory, you can use the color channels directly to make even more complex selections for color elements in your photo. Try loading the RGB luminosity then subtracting the brightness of one of the color channels. Even better, select magenta by loading the Red channel and intersecting with Blue. How would you get yellow-orange? What about cyan?

M1 before (top) and after inverting (bottom)

I need to leave you with a few notes and caveats about exploring this technique. First, channels can weigh down your document! The more channels you have, the larger the file size because they contain similar information to a regular pixel layer. Second, you can load selections and immediately create masks without saving as an alpha channel first. This is a great option if you know what you're selecting and don't need all the intermediate channels. Third, keep the Histogram panel open while you're experimenting with alpha channels to see changes in your selections in real time. Finally, users who love luminosity masks build actions to help create stacks of alpha channels for lights, darks, and midtones.

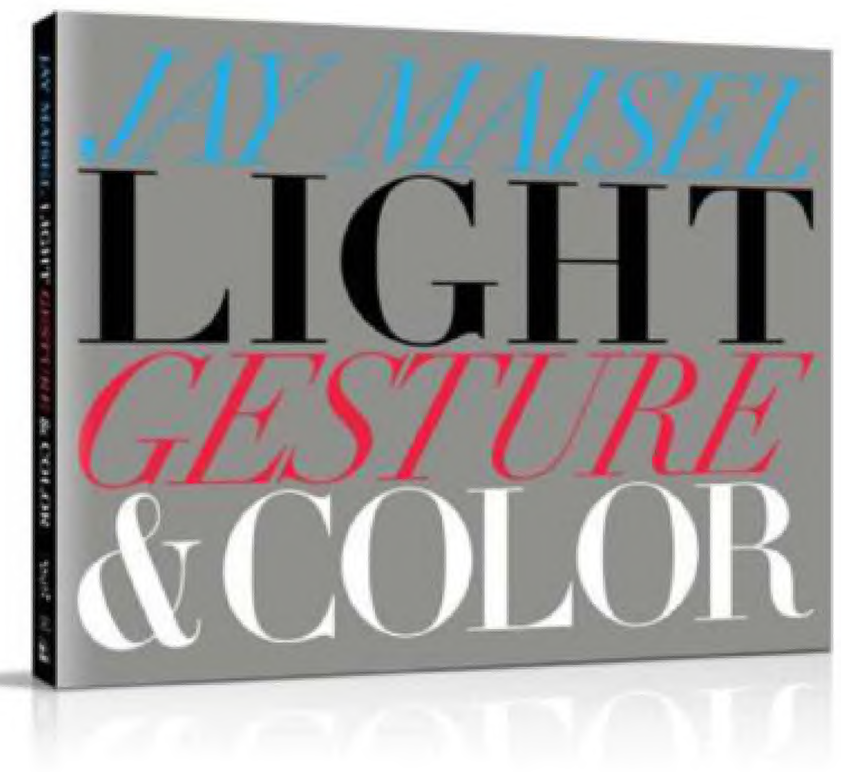
Tear into the Channels panel of the sjv_Chair.psd file to see how I've applied alpha channels to adjustments. Happy experimenting and be sure to post your results and questions to the Photoshop Proving Ground page on Facebook (www.facebook.com/psinsight). ■

Before

After

ALL IMAGES BY SCOTT VALENTINE

Find the extraordinary
in the ordinary.



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Beyond Photoshop

smart circular panoramas

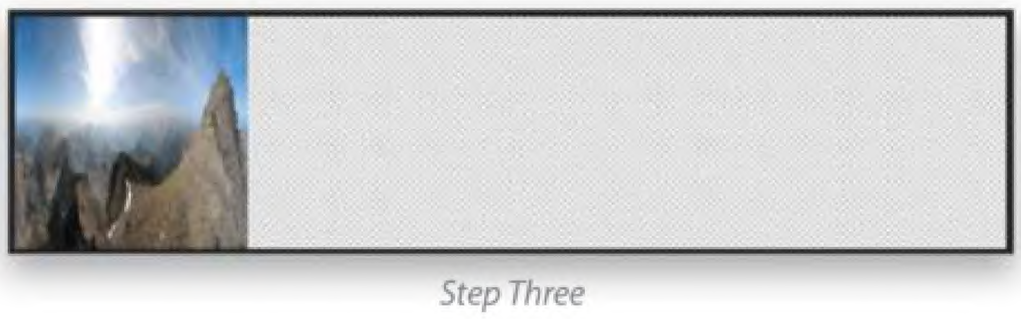
SCOTT ONSTOTT

We've been able to turn 360° panoramas into circular images for many years thanks to the Polar Coordinates filter. Here, I'll show you how to do this the smart, reeditable way with smart objects and smart filters.

Step One: Open a 360° panoramic image (you can download the one we're using here from http://kel.by/1wNN4MT). Select the Rectangular Marquee tool (M) and choose Fixed Ratio from the Style drop-down menu in the Options Bar. Type 1 in the Width field and 1 in the Height field. Drag out a square marquee on the extreme left side of the panorama.

Step One

Step Two: Press V to select the Move tool and Command-R (PC: Ctrl-R) to toggle on the rulers if they're not already displayed. Drag a vertical guide from the left ruler and place it along the right edge of the selected region. Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect all.



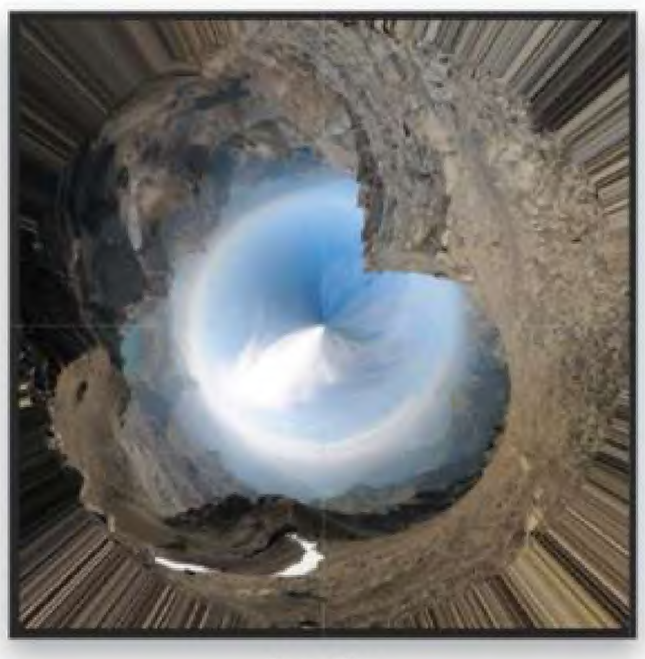
Step Three

Step Three: Choose Layer>New>Layer from Background. Type "Austria" as this layer's name and click OK to close the New Layer dialog. Right-click the layer's name in the Layers panel and choose Convert to Smart Object from the shortcut menu. Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to freely transform the smart object. Drag its right handle to the left until it snaps to the guide you drew previously. Click the Commit Transform icon (checkmark) in the Options Bar so that you now have a square image.

Step Four

Step Four: Choose Image>Trim. Select the Transparent Pixels radio button in the Based On area and click OK. Choose Filter> Distort>Polar Coordinates. Choose the Rectangular to Polar radio button and click OK.

Step Five: Right-click either ruler and choose Percent from the shortcut menu. Drag a vertical guide out from the left ruler and drop it at 50% as measured along the top ruler. Drag a horizontal guide down from the top ruler and drop it at 50% as measured by the left ruler. Select the Ellipse tool (nested under the Rectangle tool [U] in the Toolbox) and select Path from the Pick Tool Mode drop-down menu in the Options Bar. Position the cursor at the intersection of the two guides in the center of the image and, holding Shift-Option (PC: Shift-Alt), drag out a circle and drop it along the circumference of the polarized panorama to create a work path.



Step Five

Step Six: Hold the Command (PC: Ctrl) key and click the Add Layer Mask icon (circle in a square) on the lower edge of the Layers panel. This converts the work path into a vector mask, hiding the starburst effect streaming out from the center. Choose Layer>New Fill Layer>Solid Color. Type "Backdrop" as the name and click OK in the New Layer dialog. Select a dark blue similar to the color of the sky in the image and click OK to close the Color Picker. Choose Layer>Arrange>Send Backward.

Step Six

Step Seven: Select layer Austria in the Layers panel. Choose Filter> Other>Offset, click OK, and observe that Offset appears as a smart filter in the Layers panel. Drag-and-drop this filter below Polar Coordinates in the smart filter stack within this layer so that Offset gets evaluated first.

Step Eight: Double-click the Offset smart filter to reopen the Offset dialog. Drag the Horizontal slider a short distance to the right, and click OK to see how it has rotated the image. Repeat this process until you iteratively rotate the peak to the bottom of the circular composition (this happens at +1240 pixels in this case). Hide the guides by pressing Command-; (PC: Ctrl-;).

Step Eight

Step Nine: Click the Add a Layer Style icon (*fx*) on the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Bevel & Emboss from the shortcut menu. In the Layer Style dialog, set Size to 250 px and Angle to 90°, and click OK. This style produces a shadow around the bottom of the circle, making the composition appear more like a crystal ball.

Step Nine

Step Ten: With this smart object and filter setup, in addition to creating crystal balls, you can also easily create planets. Double-click the smart object's layer thumbnail to open its document window. Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to freely transform the panorama. Type 180 in the Rotate field in the Options Bar and click the Commit icon. Close and save the PSB file by pressing Command-W and Enter. The composition has turned itself inside out.

Step Eleven: Double-click the Offset smart filter to open its dialog. Drag the Horizontal slider a little to the left and click OK to see the rotation. Repeat this process until you iteratively rotate the peak to the top of the circular composition (this happens at –266 in this case).

In this article you have created a smart framework, allowing you

INSIDE PHOTOSHOP.COM

Product Reviews

Capture One Pro 8

Professional RAW Converter

Review by Erik Vlietinck

It was by no means a slow application, but version 8 of Capture One Pro has been updated with a new processing engine. I got my hands on a fresh copy and found several improvements that make it the choice of the professional, starting with its pristine, neutral demosaicing algorithm.

Capture One Pro 8's new processing engine makes for an even faster processing speed than its predecessor, even on somewhat older machines like my three-year-old iMac. But speed isn't everything: the Capture One engineers tried harder and improved a lot of Capture One's already impressive functionality.

Improvements that caught my eye include better image quality when using the High Dynamic Range (HDR) tool, which lets you restore detail in highlights and shadows without introducing noise. Another impressive improvement is much better image quality when working with high ISO images. I tested the new Luminance Noise Reduction with an image shot at ISO 3200 and compared the results with a DxO PRIME reduction. Much to my surprise, there was hardly any difference. The improved luminance noise-reduction algorithm is one of the main reasons why you'll want to check out version 8.

The addition of a Natural Clarity method is good, but there's only a subtle difference between that and the Neutral setting. Not so subtle, and absolutely a winner, is the expansion of the number of corrections, edits, and effects you can apply to local areas using the Layers feature. There are now three types of layers: adjustment (the one we know from previous versions), healing, and cloning. You can freely switch between the three. The two new layer types offer the same sort of functionality as the Clone Stamp and Healing Brush tools in Photoshop, but they seemed easier to use for someone who has never worked with these types of brushes before. You can also apply more local adjustments, including White Balance, HDR, Noise Reduction, and Purple Fringing.

Film Grain is new, too, but that's the one feature I wasn't so sure about. Capture One Pro 8 doesn't try to emulate specific films (e.g., Kodak TRI-X 400), but only draws inspiration from them. Phase One argues that there are simply too many variables. For example, a film from the '50s will look different than the same product in the '70s. There are questions of how old it was before it was used, how it was developed, etc.; hence, the more generic approach of adding Cubic Grain, Smooth Grain, Silver Rich, and others. For a full film stock emulation, users should create a creative style and fiddle with the Black & White conversion sliders, the Curve panel, and Film Grain.

Finally, the digital asset management (DAM) part of Capture One Pro 8 is slowly maturing. You can now import your Apple Aperture Library straight into a Capture One catalog. Catalogs can have hierarchical keywords, catalog folders can be synchronized, etc. Sessions, which are especially useful for tethered shooting, are still available and the import functionality has been differentiated between catalogs and sessions. Metadata editing has improved and metadata can be edited in the Filters panel.

For Capture One Pro 8, Phase One has expanded tethered functionality. Support for many cameras has been added—tethered support for select Sony cameras, for example—but obviously the most sophisticated support is still to be had with Phase One cameras. ■

Company: Phase One — Price: $299; Upgrade: $99; Subscription: $10/month

Web: www.phaseone.com — Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆

▲ Hot: Noise reduction; local adjustments; tethered shooting

▼ Not:

JPEGmini Pro

Compress JPEGs without Artifacts

Review by Erik Vlietinck

Compressing an image, especially a JPEG, to its smallest possible size often introduces ugly artifacts. JPEGmini Pro seeks to avoid that.

JPEGmini Pro reduces the file size of JPEG photos while preserving the originals' resolution and quality. It uses all of your processing cores and can process images of up to 50 megapixels. JPEGmini Pro uses parameters that have been tuned to reduce the file size without affecting perceptual quality and is based on a proprietary compressing algorithm that doesn't introduce quality loss. It's a bit like JPEG 2000 or WebP, but one of the major benefits of JPEGmini is that it doesn't require a whole new format that's supported by few Web browsers, if any.

JPEGmini analyzes the input image using a quality detector that imitates the human visual system. Based on this analysis the app applies the maximum amount of compression that won't cause visible artifacts at 100% magnification. Size reductions of 70–80% are achieved easily with JPEGs greater than 8 megapixels.

I tested JPEGmini Pro with three 40-megapixel Hasselblad files and a dozen 12-megapixel Sony Alpha files. This app is fast! The compression it achieved was equally impressive, and even a bit more than claimed with some of my photos. The visual characteristics of the JPEGmini Pro version were identical to the original when viewed at 100%. When magnified at 200%, I could see tiny differences in small details.

An added benefit of the desktop edition is the interface, which has a gauge showing you the reduction rate or how much disk space you've saved. In addition, in the preferences you can also set an image size reduction to one of three presets, or a customizable maximum width or height. Finally, you can choose to have the originals compressed or leave them alone. The Pro version also includes a plug-in for Adobe Lightroom. ■

Company: Beamr	Price: $149
Web: www.jpegmini.com	Rating: ◆◆◆◆◐
▲ Hot: No artifacts; excellent compression rates; fast	
▼ Not: Only compresses JPEGs	

xScope 4

Graphic and Compositing Design Assistant

Review by Erik Vlietinck

The Iconfactory and Artis Software developed the first version of xScope for the purpose of designing layouts and measuring or inspecting onscreen graphics. This simple tool had only Ruler, Guide, Frame, and Screen modules that worked across all applications. Now there's xScope 4, which truly enables a fluid workflow.

Sharing your work on Dribble is as easy as selecting the predefined Dribble Uploads Screen size from the Preferences panel. Mirror lets you show Retina comps the easy way: Just drop a PSD file onto the xScope 4 Dock icon and the comp will be sent to the iOS device every time you save.

Mirror also has the following new features: Templates automatically generate views of an app icon or wallpaper for different scenarios in iOS. It comes with AirPlay Mirroring, meaning any file, clipboard, or Photoshop document can be displayed on Apple TV. To prevent updates to a Photoshop document you're working on, it can be locked to the iOS display when you switch to a new PSD file. xScope saves mirroring mode across launches and automatically reconnects to Photoshop when it's turned on so you can immediately pick up where you left off. In Mirroring mode, you can also display file contents and the image clipboard. xScope now also supports Acorn files.

Web designers will love the xScope 4 features, too. For instance, Text shows the measurement of character glyphs when you hover over the glyph; Overlay makes prototyping Photoshop mockups for Web design extremely simple, with grids that change your browser to a set breakpoint; and Loupe lets you sample and save colors to Adobe (ACO) files for use with Photoshop, Illustrator, etc.

If your design involves exact positioning of elements, or you want a tool to try out different designs across creative applications, then xScope 4 is indispensable. ■

Company: The Iconfactory	Price: $49.99 (Upgrade: $24.99)
Web: www.xscopeapp.com	Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆
▲ Hot: Enables better design/compositing; beautiful, efficient interface	
▼ Not:	

ThunderBay 4 RAID 5 Edition

Thunderbolt 2 RAID Storage

Review by Daniel M. East

If you're unsure about adopting Thunderbolt technology for one reason or another, then wait no more. The need for speed is more important than ever to take advantage of your computer's potential and, for storage, connectivity was often the weak link. Enter the ThunderBay 4 from Other World Computing (OWC). Now that Thunderbolt 2 is in place with most newer computers, there are more peripherals than ever that take advantage of the new blazing throughput speeds and add the kind of expansion that make things like backing up huge video and design files far less time consuming.

Not only is this thing one of the fastest storage solutions on the market at this price, but it's incredibly well thought out and includes features like email notifications with the use of SoftRAID for OS X. According to OWC, by combining the best of hardware and software RAID features, they're able to deliver better performance with less drain on other computing tasks. Plus, the ThunderBay 4 has dual Thunderbolt 2 ports for even further expansion for things like monitors or hub expansion. With 32 MB of cache per drive (128 MB total), and depending on the drives you select, this thing is like a finely tuned F1 racecar. While the unit itself weighs in at around 9 lbs (without the drives installed), it's quiet and smooth in its operation.

The ThunderBay 4 RAID storage isn't just fast, it's superior in performance to everything else in its class. It's available as a housing (bring your own drives), and in capacities from 4–24 TB (the 12-TB unit was tested). Other World Computing continues to produce outstanding storage solutions for nearly every need and this latest addition is one of their finest to date. ■

Company: Other World Computing — Price: $1,088 as tested

Web: www.macsales.com — Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆

▲ Hot: Speed; ease of use; expandable to 24 TB; quiet

▼ Not:

Flashpoint CL-500R LED Circular Light

Powerful, Compact LED

Review by Daniel M. East

Creating the right lighting environment for our subjects where there's no natural light can generate a lot of heat, as well as electrical use from traditional fixtures. With the advent of LED (light emitting diode) lighting, these two issues simply go away. As an excellent addition to their CL-series LED panels, the Flashpoint CL-500R LED Circular Light takes it one step further with super-clean 5600K daylight color for some serious coverage that won't break the bank.

What sets the CL-500R apart, one might ask? It's surprisingly small and it has a respectable, slightly tight, 60° coverage area. This makes it ideal for things like macro product photography, fill lighting, and some video applications. It includes a soft diffusion cover for portraits that works well on its own and with the addition of their larger CL-1300 model, for example. The CL-500R fits on most umbrella shaft sizes for easy mounting. Flashpoint offers some great accessories, such as an optional remote dimmer and battery pack.

The real aha! moment with this light wasn't as much about the lack of heat or use of power, but the outstanding look of the images with this smooth, white light. It's not as warm in color as traditional lighting, but creating those color effects in Photoshop can be done after the fact. By adjusting the intensity, almost every subject will show its true colors and allow the exposures to be their best. The control stays in your hands with as much, or as little, light as you need. It includes a carrying case and all of the needed cables. ■

Company: Adorama Camera, Inc. — Price: $250

Web: www.adorama.com — Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆

▲ Hot: Adjustable 5600k light; compact; ultra-low heat; accessories

▼ Not:

Glow HexaPop

An Umbrella, Octabox Combo Built for Speed

Review by Michael Corsentino

Adorama recently introduced a line of useful and competitively priced light modifiers collectively known as Glow, part of their Flashpoint family of products. We'll take a look the Flashpoint Glow HexaPop, a cross between a hexagonal octabox and an umbrella, designed specifically for on-the-go, external flash users.

Available in both 20" and 24" models, the HexaPop is designed to work either on camera with a bracket and cable, or off with a light stand or stick. Owing to a unified, spring-loaded design, the HexaPop can be set up or torn down in seconds, requiring considerably less time and effort than traditional softboxes. The HexaPop's spring-loaded, two-button release mechanism pops when engaged, hence the "pop" in HexaPop. This, along with internal support rods attached to the HexaPop's fabric and built-in speedrings, enables it to be set up with the ease of an umbrella but have the superior quality and flexibility of an octabox.

Made from high-quality, durable fabric and lined with silver to provide a more directional, efficient, and specular source, the HexaPop has one layer of diffusion fabric with no internal baffle. For this reason, you may want to feather this modifier to avoid hotspots.

Additionally, with some flashes, you may want to rotate their heads 90° when mounting them to the HexaPop bracket. This will position the body of the flash sideways, permitting the line-of-sight, front-facing sensors to communicate properly with cameras and additional lights.

A carrying case and shoulder strap are included, making it easy to keep track of the HexaPop's multiple pieces. ■

Company: Adorama Camera, Inc. Price: $129.95–159.95

Web: www.adorama.com Rating: ◆◆◆◇◇

▲ Hot: Lightweight; compact; durable fabric; rapid set up/tear down

▼ Not: No internal baffle; bracket assembly's pieces easy to lose

DF Studio

Cloud-Based Photography Management

Review by Michael Corsentino

As camera pixel counts grow, frame rates get faster, storage needs balloon, and photographic workflow becomes increasingly mobile in nature, the nagging question of how to implement the best asset management solution persists. Along with changing delivery methods, sizes, formats, and client expectations, our asset management needs and requirements are also growing and changing.

Providing access to your images anywhere, anytime, the cloud-based storage and photographic workflow service DF Studio offers an affordable, one-stop solution for online asset management and delivery. Based around a robust, yet familiar set of tools, DF Studio gives you the power you need for a complete workflow without a steep learning curve. Using the rock-solid security and reliability of Amazon Cloud, DF Studio allows users to store, manage, edit, filter, review, share, request approval, and deliver files. Keep large libraries organized using DF Studio's Active and Cold Storage, view file and folder sizes, select files across multiple projects, make collections without duplicating files, and create Web portfolios for image proofing and review. Users can send private approval messages to clients via DF Studio's easy-to-use Messenger feature, and deliver approved files directly from DF Studio. You can even watermark and scale your images, as needed.

DF Studio provides a variety of upload and import options, supporting virtually every known photographic file format, all with accurate previews and stacking algorithms for sidecar and RAW files. Plug-ins are available for Lightroom and PhotoMechanic, or use DF Studio's own DFS Speed Link, a standalone desktop app to easily bulk upload images or create a watched folder for automated future uploads.

There's more to DF Studio than I can possibly cover here. Suffice it to say, DF Studio is a big winner and definitely worth a look. ■

Company: DigitalFusion Creative Technologies, Inc. Price: Subscriptions from $20/month

Web: www.dfstudio.com Rating: ◆◆◆◆◐

▲ Hot: Secure; reliable; access anywhere; file handling

▼ Not: Lacking much support for video files

SpiderPro Memory Card Holder and Lens Pouches

Single Camera System Accessories

Review by Steve Baczewski

The SpiderPro Single Camera System is a comprehensive camera carrying system that consists of a SpiderPro Camera Holster, Plate, Pin, and Belt. This system (sold separately, $135) serves as the basis for three accessories being reviewed: two lens pouches and a memory card organizer. [*For a review of the SpiderPro Single Camera System, see* Photoshop User, *October 2012.—Ed.*]

The base camera system has a funnel-shaped metal holster on the side of the belt that holds your camera. A metal plate with a projecting metal pin and a ballhead screws into your camera's tripod mount, and then the metal ball slides into the holster's slot. Your camera swivels upside down with lens facing back and rests securely on your hip. This arrangement allows for quick access that makes shooting much more spontaneous. A switch on the holster lets you lock the camera in the holster.

SpiderPro's Memory Card Organizer and Medium and Large Lens Pouches loop onto the belt and help distribute the weight. The padded pouches are roomy and designed to accommodate your lens with lens hood attached, and include a water-resistant cover and a built-in tether to hold your rear lens cap. The memory card organizer folds out and down from the belt and can hold three SD cards and six CF cards.

I hiked 12 miles with my Canon EOS 5D Mark III and two lenses and the belt never slipped or rocked uncomfortably against my side. I swapped between my 70–200mm and 24–105mm Canon lenses with hoods attached with an ease I hadn't experienced before. It's the most comfortable, ergonomically efficient, and reassuringly safe solution for carrying your equipment for long hours in the field. Taking the weight off my shoulder and freeing my hands with easy access to my camera and lenses is a liberating experience. ■

Company: Shai Gear LLC — Price: Holder: $35; Medium Pouch: $65; Large Pouch: $75

Web: www.spiderholster.com — Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆

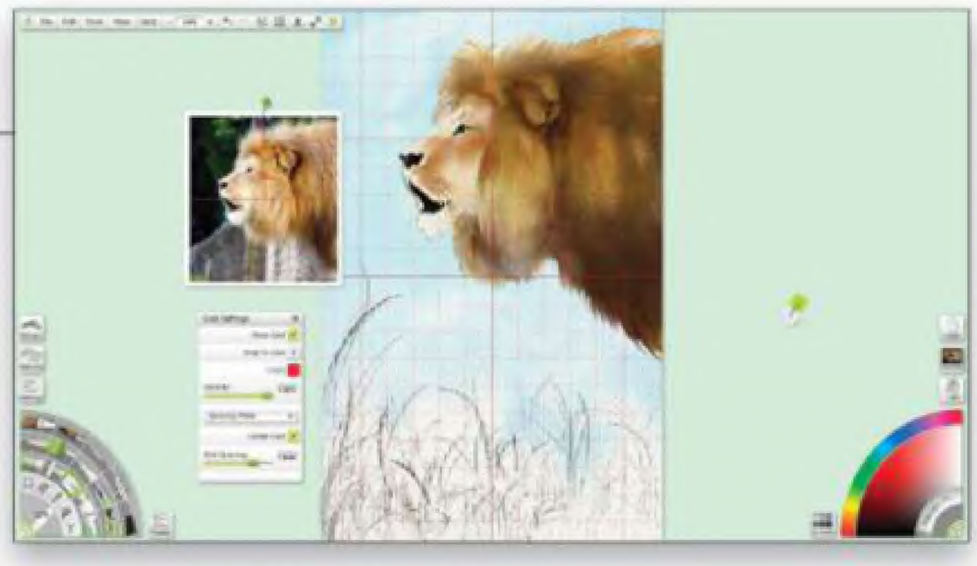
▲ Hot: Hands-free; no strain; quick access

▼ Not:

ArtRage 4.5

Painting Software

Review by Pete Collins



ArtRage 4.5 is a painting program that's worth checking out. It has so many natural-feeling brushes and options that you'll love. The interface is clean and customizable so you can put everything you don't need out of the way and just paint. It handles layers and blending like a champ and the ability to add shadowing to certain

et those things turn you off. You can tell the value of a
hen it keeps surprising you with all the extra things it can
e a kid in a candy store trying to figure out which brushes
gs to use next. The limitations of this program are almost
ue to my talent level and not any shortcoming of the prod-
ge 4.5 is highly recommended! ■

Ambient Design Ltd. — Price: $49.90

.artrage.com — Rating: ◆◆◆◆◆

ealistic look and feel; loaded with options; value

rush/tip preview; custom tips; randomness

strokes is very nice. One of the neat features is that you can use reference images or other imagery for your paintings. I can't believe the program is so cheap for what it offers, and there are versions for iPad and iPhone.

There are a couple of little things that keep me from giving it a five-star rating. The brush preview and settings sometimes make it hard to see the subtle nuances that you may be trying to dial in to your brush. I wish it were bigger. Another item on my wish list is to be able to create my own brush tip shapes and add some randomness to the strokes so they don't look so uniform. This can be seen with the oil paints that are thicker, especially in the corners where I wish the transitions were a bit smoother.

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Company: A

Web: www.

▲ Hot: Re

▼ Not: Br

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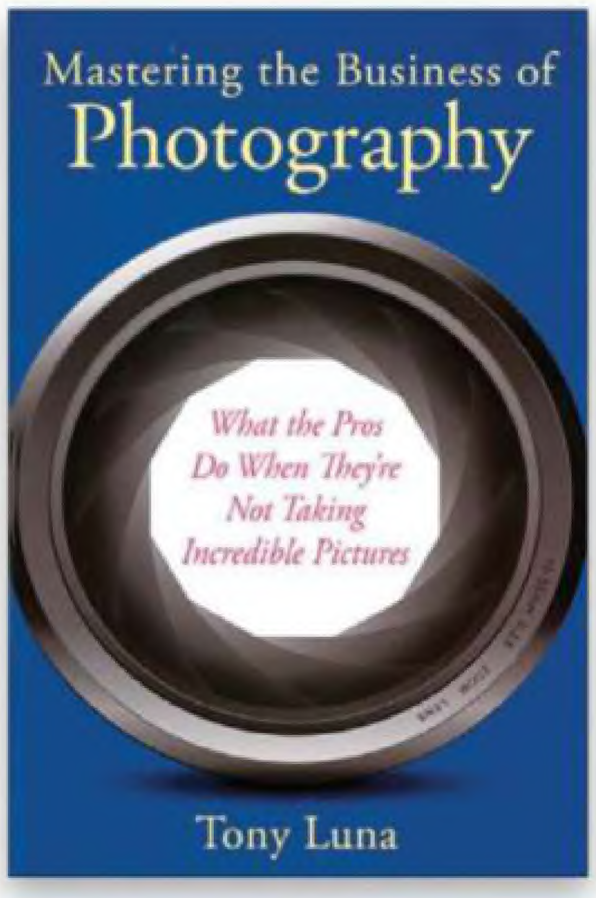


Mastering the Business of Photography: What the Pros Do When They're Not Taking Incredible Pictures

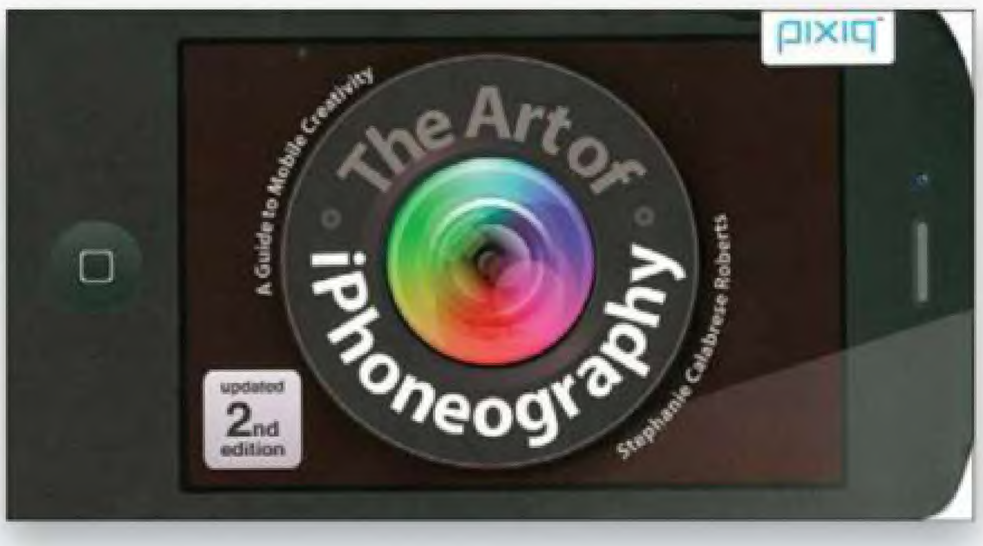
By Tony Luna

Black and white, including the few photos within, this book is all business (no pun intended). Much of the content consists of the author interviewing experts about specific aspects of the business of being a professional photographer. He also provides numerous sample forms and charts that you can use to stay organized and run your business. (If you're the head of a studio and have an employee that handles most of the business side, provide that person with a copy of this book and ask how the book can contribute to the current workflow, and perhaps how he or she could improve the book.) While the book is a bit of a dry read, don't dose off in the middle. You'll find lots of little tips and simple tricks to improve your bottom line and protect your work from being used outside the terms of the contract for that job.

Publisher: Pixiq/Sterling Publishing Pages: 160

Website: www.sterlingpublishing.com

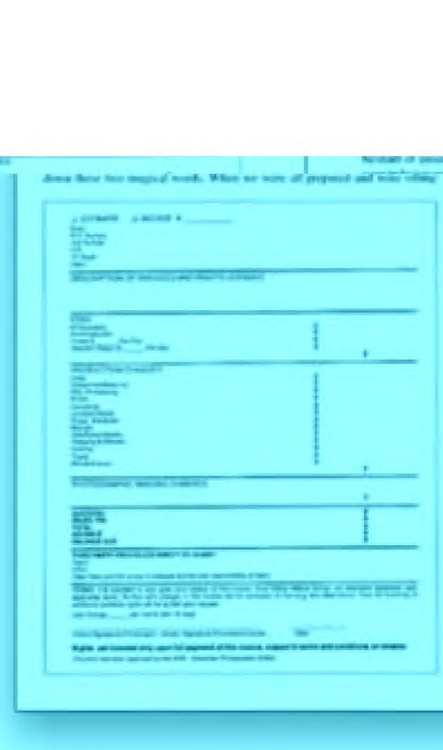
▶ Price: $19.95 ▶ Rating: ◆◆◆◆◇



The Art of iPhoneography: A Guide to Mobile Creativity

By Stephanie Calabrese Roberts

I almost walked past this book but thought it could be a gift for my wife. I soon realized that very little of the book is iPhone-specific and is applicable to any smartphone or tablet camera. And then I saw that the final two-thirds of the book could be applied to most photography! The author also profiles nine photographers, interviewing them about photography and their careers and showing samples of their work. My favorite parts of the book are Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. "Spark Your Creativity" includes 100 photos with a short explanation of why each particular image represents a certain concept. The following chapter, "Shoot How You Feel," includes 34 images, each with three descriptive words below. The author challenges you to choose which of the three words best describes the image. She also suggests that you come back at a later date and reevaluate your choices.



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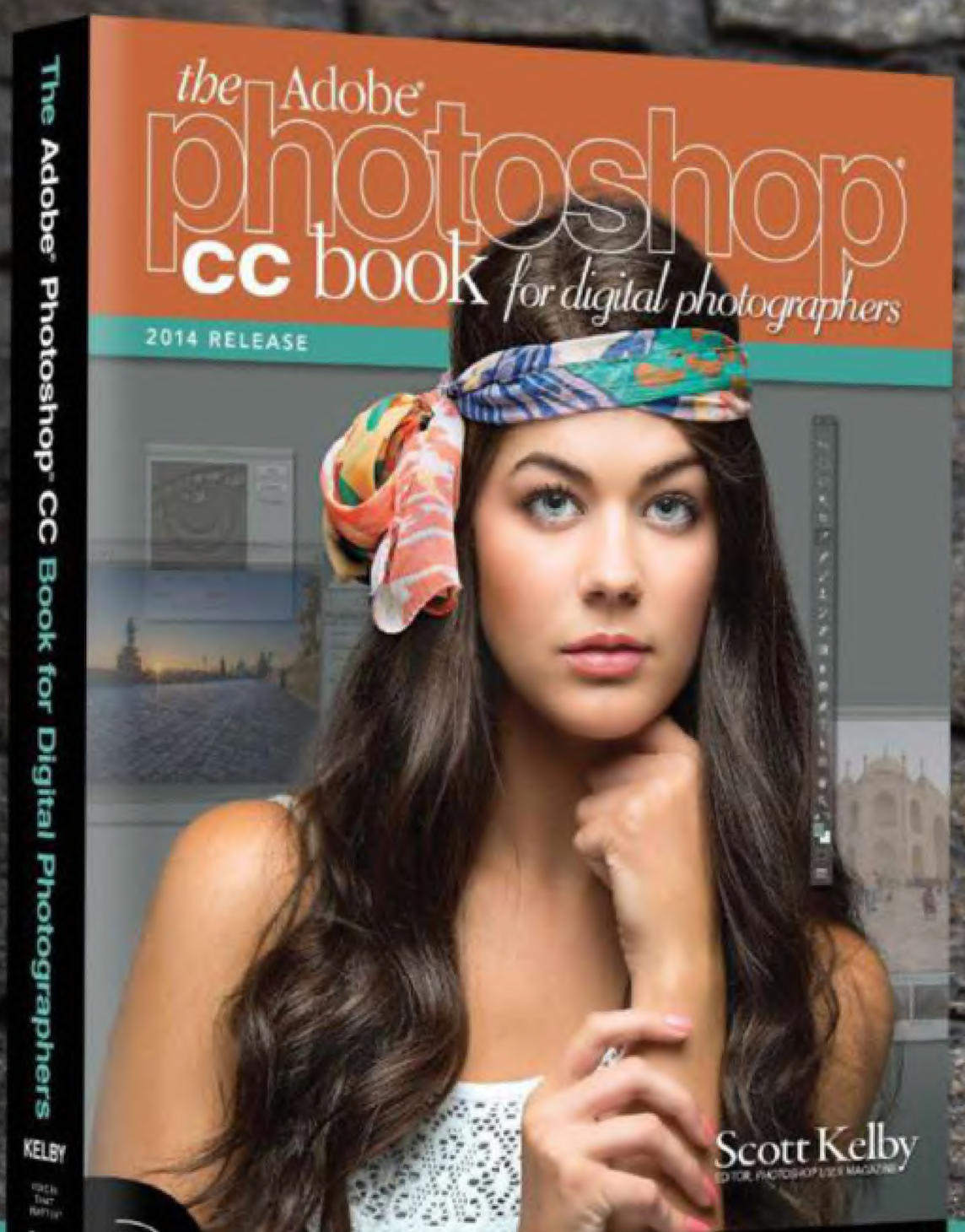

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Photoshop Tips

boost your productivity and creativity

COLIN SMITH

We all love tips because they are those little things that we didn't know, or have forgotten. They're the things that make you say "ahhh," and smile. They save you time and make you look smart to other people. So, let's hear it for tips!

No Background Layer, Just Beautiful Transparency

It's common to convert a Background layer into a regular layer that can be edited. If you're creating a new document, and you know that you need to start with an editable layer, why don't you save yourself some time and create the document without a Background layer, but rather a transparent layer? This is essentially a blank layer with nothing in it that's all ready for your content. You can do this in the New dialog (File>New) by choosing the Transparent option in the Background Contents drop-down menu.

Your Guide to Guides

Years ago, I remember trying to use chewing gum and string on my monitor to mark a position to align elements. Thankfully, Adobe added guides to Photoshop. To add guides to your document, you need to first turn on Rulers (Command-R [PC: Ctrl-R]). You can click-and-drag from the horizontal and vertical rulers to create guides. These will sit wherever you drop them on your document. When you're dragging out a guide, press the Option (PC: Alt) key to change the orientation of the guide from vertical to horizontal, or vice versa.

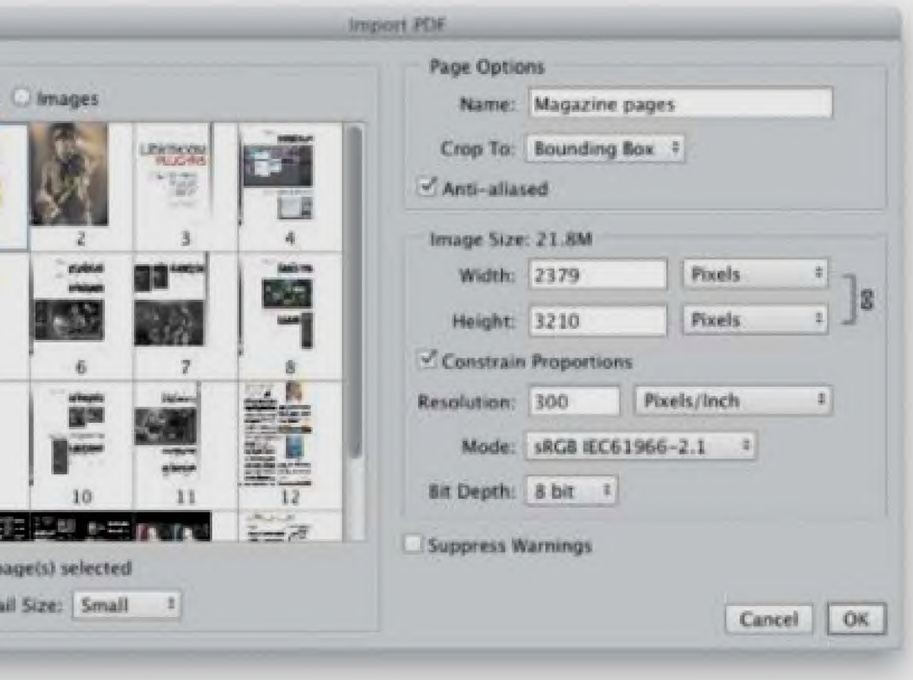
Refine Edge

When you're cutting out objects with a selection tool, Refine Edge is useful for cleaning up the edges of a selection. It works similar to the options in the Select>Modify menu, but it's visual and provides more options. Here's a tip that will help you get nice clean edges. When you have an active selection, click the Refine Edge button in the Options Bar. In the Refine Edge dialog, click the Show Radius checkbox. Drag the Radius slider until you see an outline around the object. If the outline is thin, you'll have a sharp selection; if it's wider, then you're able to create softer selections, which work well on hair and fur.

Import PDF

Did you know that you can open a PDF into Photoshop? Choose File>Open and navigate to the PDF you'd like to open. In the Import PDF dialog, you have two options in the Select section. The Pages option allows you to open a select page

pages and maintain the layout. The Images option gives
e ability to extract the images out of the PDF and use
If you import multiple pages or images, they will open
arate documents.
u can use this with the page layout tools in InDesign, such
wrapping around images. You can also place extracted
s into existing Photoshop documents by choosing File>
Embedded or File>Place Linked, where they will load in as
yers.

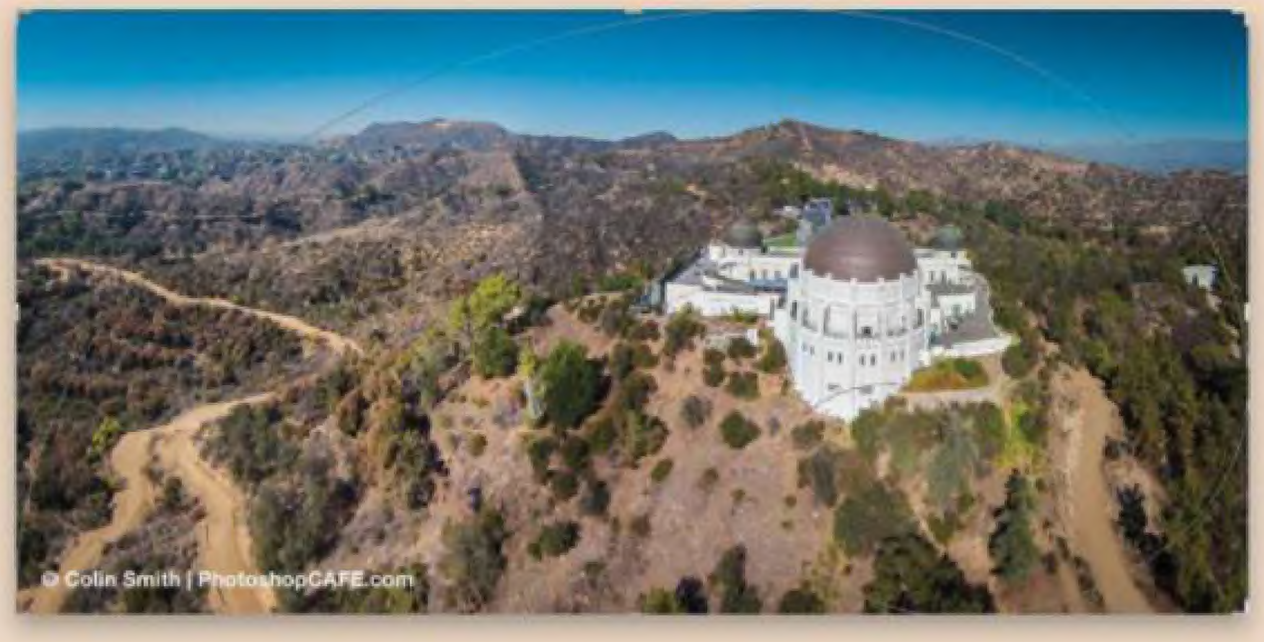


n Lens Correction

u have a number of images that you want to correct the
ion on? You'll find this tip useful when shooting with a
opter or time-lapse sequences shot with a GoPro because
little cameras and lenses tend to create a fisheye distor-
ffect. Photoshop has lens profiles that automatically cor-
ese issues. You can load in images and correct them as
, or you can choose File>Automate>Lens Correction and
process a number of them all at once. In the Lens Correc-

Overlay View When Cropping

When you're cropping a photo, you're actually working with a powerful composition tool. The way you crop the photo will affect its composition and the way the viewer's eye is guided around the image. There are some visual aids that can help you achieve the perfect crop every time. With the Crop tool (C) active, press the O key to cycle through different crop overlays. You'll see familiar ones, such as the rule of thirds and grids, but you'll also see some like the golden ratio that are useful visual aids in the way the eye perceives an image.



tion dialog, click Browse and navigate to the folder or photos you'd like to correct. You can choose a Destination Folder, a Lens Correction Profile, and Correction Options. Click OK and watch Photoshop correct the distortion.

Brush Straight Lines

There are actually many different tools that are brushes. There's the obvious Brush tool and there are others like the Dodge, Burn, Smudge, and Blur tools. They're great freeform tools that enable you to have the creative freedom to paint and play as much and as randomly as you like. What happens when you want to constrain something, such as paint in a perfectly straight line? To constrain the Brush tool, click once, hold down the Shift key, and click again elsewhere in the document. A straight line will be drawn between the two points using the current brush shape and color.

Free up Resources in a Snap

Is your computer running slow? Maybe you're working on a large image and have a smaller SSD, or you're running out of space? Perhaps all your RAM is tied up and things are moving at a snail's pace? There are a couple of things you can do to free up resources. The first thing to realize is your image size isn't limited to the canvas size. It's actually the size of the largest layer, even though you can't necessarily see all the pixels. To trim this down, press Command-A (PC: Ctrl-A) to select all, and choose Image>Crop. This alone can reduce the file size a lot. The second thing (sometimes the first thing) is to choose Edit>Purge and select one (or all) of the options in the menu. When you're working in Photoshop, a number of things are loaded into memory, such as undo and history states. These can fill your memory and slow things down. In a pinch (say your RAM and scratch disk are so full that you can't save your file), you can purge and free up enough resources to complete your critical task.

Sizing for HiDPI and Retina Displays

Retina and HiDPI displays can be a pain when used for creating Web assets. Sure, everything looks nice and smooth but (and a big but) the assets you're creating for a website are displaying half the size they will when you export them. The solution is to go to View>200%. This will display the Web assets at the actual size that you'll use them.

If you're doing a lot of multimedia work and need a more permanent solution, locate the Photoshop application on your computer (it's typically in your Applications folder). Click once on the app icon to highlight it, press Command-I, and turn on the Open in Low Resolution checkbox (PC: Right-click, select Properties, click on the Compatibility tab, and turn on Disable Display Scaling on High DPI Settings). Now images will display at normal size until you turn that option off. ■

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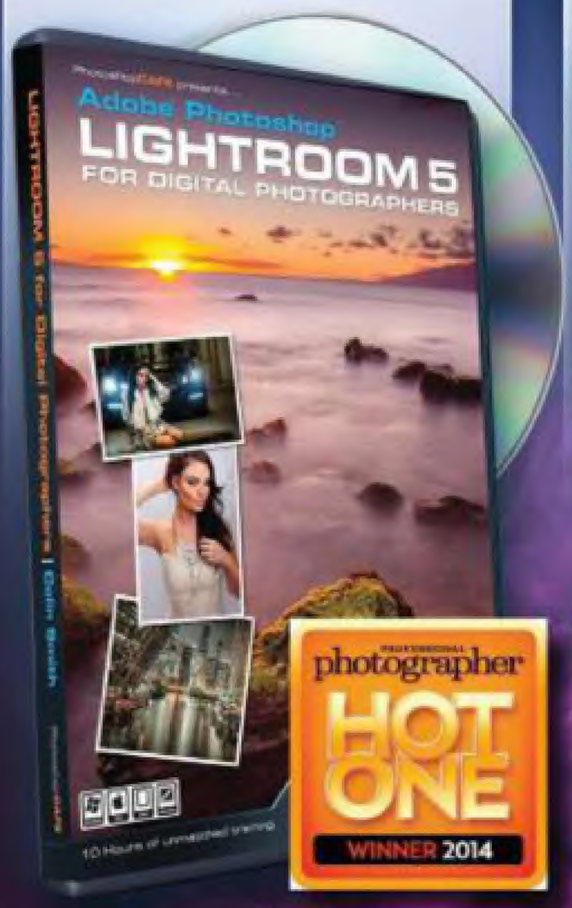

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Basics of DSLR Photography

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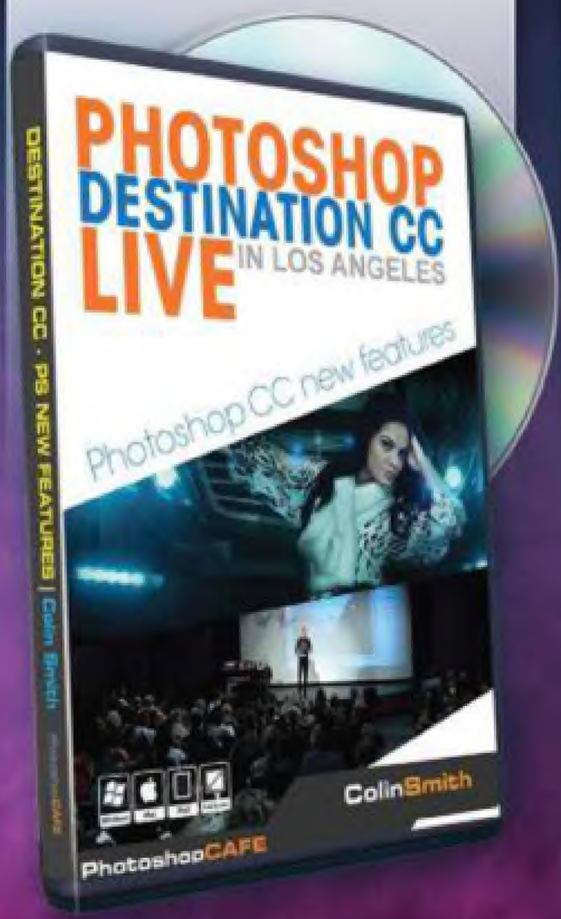
New Features Photoshop CC

The Definative Way to Learn New Photoshop CC features



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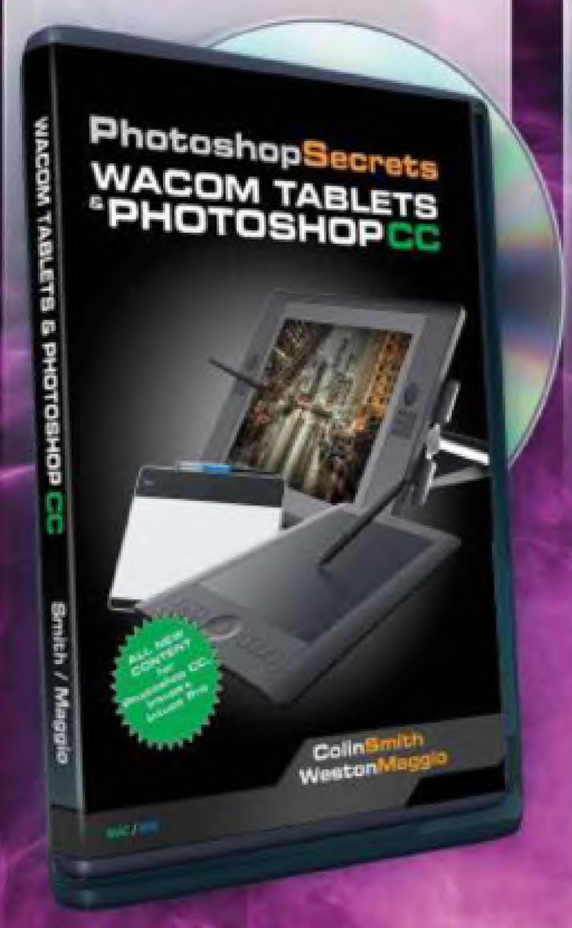

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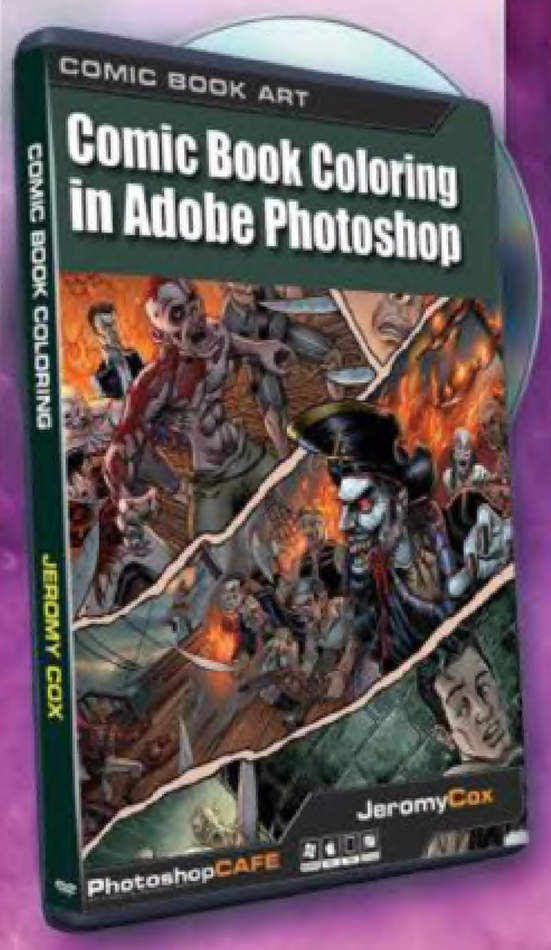
In Photoshop

Learn from a DC and Marvel Artist.



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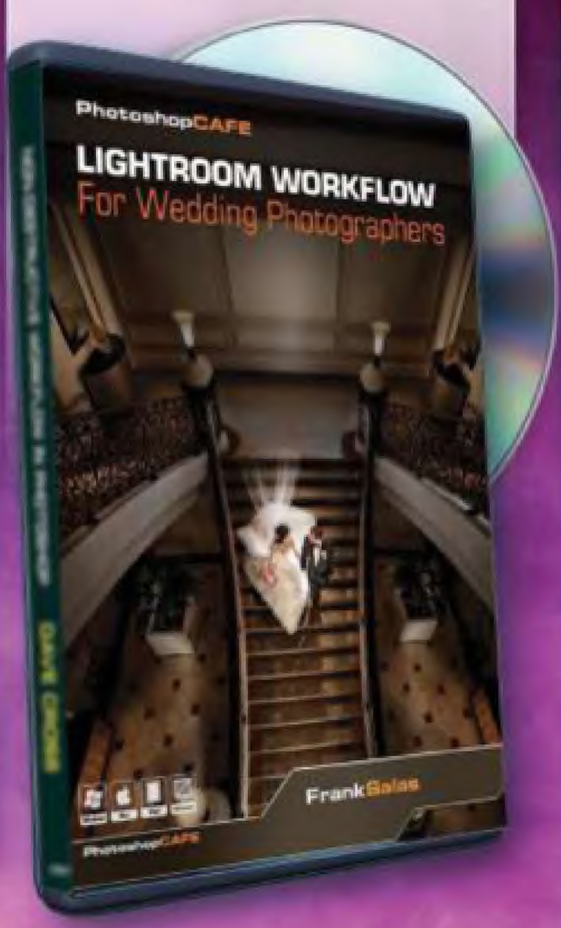
For Wedding photographers

How to Edit a Wedding Shoot In Lightroom



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›› Answers to Photoshop and gear-related questions

BY PETER BAUER

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To: Ursula
From: KelbyOne Help Desk

JDI stands for "just do it!" These are small tasks for the Adobe Photoshop team that help improve our Photoshop experience. Sometimes a JDI is a slight change to the interface to make a feature more discoverable (easier for a user to find). Some JDIs are tweaks to the way a feature works.

Typically, JDIs are requests from Photoshop users and those non-Adobe folks who help test the product before updates are released (typically called beta testers). At Photoshop World 2013 in Las Vegas, Adobe set up an area for attendees to make their suggestions directly to the Adobe engineers who work on Photoshop. In some cases the program code needed to make the change was written on the spot, right in front of the attendee who made the suggestion—what some referred to as the Code-a-Thon.

Some of the "why-didn't-we-always-have-this?" changes include being able to select any color for the background of a new document. (The Background Contents menu through Photoshop CS6 was limited to White, Background Color, and Transparent. Now you can select Other from the menu or click the color swatch to the right of the menu and open the Color Picker to choose any color for the background of a new document.)

The Curves adjustment also now supports negative numbers—something you'll likely never use—and you can now add 10 Color Sampler points instead of four—something you'll love if you use the Color Sampler tool (nested under the Eyedropper tool [I]). And the Color Sampler tool's Options Bar has changed the Clear button to Clear All to make sure that you know exactly what you're doing when you click that button.

Among the most noticeable changes to the interface are the Color and Swatches panels. Swatches now shows the most recently used colors as swatches at the top of the panel, and the Color panel has been revitalized with a number of configurations, including an interface that most resembles the Color Picker as the default.

A number of JDIs that you may never notice are improved performance with Mercury Graphics Engine (especially Smart Sharpen); layer names that can be as long as 255 characters; changes to the behavior of the Direct Selection tool (nested under the Path Selection tool [A]) when clicking within a shape (unselected anchor points are visible); and a new option in Preferences>Interface for a narrower Options Bar for smaller displays. (Working on a 13" display? Check it out.) Share on Behance includes a number of new languages, and there's now a Don't Show Again box for the Missing Fonts warning message.

One change that you might not have noticed but probably will never live without again is the capability to change a Background layer to a regular layer with a single click. Rather than double-clicking the layer name Background and renaming the layer, simply click the lock icon to the right of the Background layer name in the Layers panel to convert it to a regular layer that supports transparency and can be moved in the Layers panel hierarchy. (The layer name automatically changes from Background to Layer 0. If you already have a layer named Layer 0, the new layer name is changed to the next available numeric layer number.)

If you have a pet peeve or have noticed a problem, let the Photoshop team know through this link: http://feedback.photoshop.com/photoshop_family. ■

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